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# PRÉCIS WRITING

*Passages Judiciously Selected  
With an Introduction  
On the Art of Précis*

BY

ERIC PARTRIDGE

M.A., B.LITT. (OXON.)

LONDON

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For  
Trevor Davis, headmaster  
and the assistant masters  
of  
Hulme Grammar School, Manchester  
among whom I passed  
many happy days in 1925



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## PREFACE

THE shortest preface is the best. This can hardly be of the shortest, but it is necessary.

The passages are suitable to persons of from 15 $\frac{1}{2}$  to 18 years ; or, to put it differently, to candidates in those examinations which one takes at that period of one's life—School Certificate, Matriculation, Entrance, Junior, etc., etc., etc.

The literary range is wider than is usual in précis books : and solemnity has not been my chief aim, although there is a liberal sufficiency of dignity ; I have tried to make an interesting and informative selection. As an ex-schoolmaster, ex-lecturer, ex-publisher, I possess some experience of the needs of précis-ers ; and as an examiner or reviser to three examining bodies, I possess some more. That my views are not wholly those of the conventionalists will be condemned by many of the conventionalists ; I feel that the ‘ rules and regulations ’ concerning précis are a shade too academic and traditional.

E. P.



# PRÉCIS WRITING



## INTRODUCTION

HERE is the ideal :

‘ If we try to analyse any given propositions we shall find in general that they are logical sums. . . . But our analysis, if carried far enough, must come to the point where it reaches propositional forms which are not themselves composed of simpler propositional forms. We must eventually reach the ultimate connexion of the terms, the immediate connexion which cannot be broken without destroying the propositional form as such. The propositions which represent this ultimate connexion of terms I call, after B[ertrand] Russell, atomic propositions. They, then, are the kernels of every proposition ; *they* contain the material, and all the rest is only a development of this material. It is to them that we have to look for the subject matter of propositions.’<sup>1</sup>

But it is, for us here and now, only an ideal. We are not supermen, nor is a superhuman standard demanded of us. Here is the human touch, supplied by Mr. A. P. Herbert in *What a Word !*, 1935. He quotes this letter from his ‘ favourite “ multiple store ” ’ :

MADAM,

We are in receipt of your favour of the 9th inst. with regard to the estimate required for the removal

<sup>1</sup> L. Wittgenstein, ‘ Some Remarks on Logical Form ’ in *Knowledge, Experience and Realism*, Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume IX, 1929.

of your furniture and effects from the above address to Burbleton, and will arrange for a Representative to call to make an inspection on Tuesday next, the 14th inst., before 12 noon, which we trust will be convenient, after which our quotation will at once issue.

Mr. Herbert's admirable précis is this :

MADAM,

We thank you for your letter of May 9th. A man will call next Tuesday, forenoon, to see your furniture and effects, after which, without delay, we will send our estimate for their removal to Burbleton.

Many years ago, I received, from a bookseller I knew, a long-overdue account, with this letter :

DEAR MR. PARTRIDGE,

Please !

Yours sincerely,

B— B—.

By return of post, I sent a cheque and this letter :

DEAR MR. ——,

Herewith.

E— P—.

Promptly came, with a receipt, his reply :

DEAR MR. ——,

Thanks !

B— B—.

No more was needed : but how very wordy those three letters might have been—indeed, in Business English would have been !

But, I hear some impatient fellow ask—but what is précis? Well, if we must have our *t*'s crossed, our *i*'s dotted, and our précis precise, a précis is—to quote *The Oxford English Dictionary*—‘a concise or abridged statement; a summary; an abstract’.

Now I feel that whereas *summary* is an exact synonym of *précis*, these two are different from *abstract* and *abridgement*—and also that *abstract* is not precisely the same as *abridgement*. *Abstract* might usefully be confined to a summary or epitome of scientific or technical information—above all, of figures (e.g. statistics). Admittedly, an *abridgement* also is a compendium or an epitome: but *abstract* and *abridgement* are not interchangeable at will; and it is better to maintain than to destroy distinctions. Nor are *abridgement* and *précis* exactly synonymous. One writes a précis of a paragraph, a passage, even a chapter, or of a letter, a report, a document, but not of a book of any considerable size. (The summary of a book is, on a large scale, a compendium or an abridgement; on a small scale, a synopsis.) According to *The O.E.D.*, an *abridgement* is either ‘a compendium of a larger work, with the details abridged, and less important things omitted, but retaining the sense and substance’, or ‘an epitome or compendium of any subject that might be treated much more fully’.

There are four main ways in which a précis can be made.

I. To summarize in one's own words, and cast the summary into Reported or Indirect Speech (*oratio obliqua*); or to retain Reported Speech if the original itself is oblique.

II. To summarize in one's own words and—unless, of course, the original is itself in Reported Speech—

ignore the convention of Reported Speech ; i.e. leave in Direct Speech an original that is in Direct Speech.

I and II are recasts or re-writes.

III. To retain, so far as possible, the words of the original and, unless the original is already oblique, i.e. in Indirect Speech, to cast the summary into Oblique (or Indirect or Reported) Speech.

IV. To retain, so far as possible, the words of the original, but to ignore the convention of Reported Speech—unless the original is in Reported Speech, in which case there is no sense in turning the Indirect into the Direct mode.

I am iconoclastic in that I do not believe in turning Direct into Indirect Speech and in that I think the retention, so far as possible, of the words of the original, yields as good a précis, *qua* précis, as a recast (or re-write).

That there is something to be said for the custom or convention of expressing one's précis in Indirect Speech, I admit ; for one thing, the précis gains in impersonality (if that is a gain). But much more can be said<sup>1</sup> against it : one takes longer to cast a précis into Indirect Speech than into Direct, unless the original is in Indirect ; a précis in Indirect is more difficult to write ; therefore, the proportion of errors will be larger in an Indirect than in a Direct précis ; and the potentiality of ambiguity is much higher in Indirect than in Direct Speech. As a school exercise, Reported Speech has its intellectual value ; but in the practical world, to turn Direct into Indirect Speech is a waste of time. Moreover, it is a relic of

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., the article on Reported Speech in my forthcoming book on English usage,

a rigid Classicism : why should we be forced to imitate Livy ?

Most of the Examining Boards of Great Britain recommend Method I : a summary couched in one's own words and cast into Reported Speech. Failing that, they tolerate Methods II and III—III, a summary that, cast into Reported, retains much or even most of the wording of the original ; II, a summary not in Reported, yet written in one's own words. But they frown on IV, the method that, abandoning the convention of Reported, yet keeps as close as possible to the wording of the original.

I plead for the abolition of Reported Speech (unless the original is in Reported) from précis writing. Which, when, of Methods II and IV do I recommend ? As a literary exercise, as a training in composition, Method II (one's own language, in Direct Speech) is superior to Method IV (Direct Speech in words keeping as is idiomatically possible to those of the original) ; but as précis *qua* précis, IV is superior, for this is the method that excludes error more than any other method does.

In short, there is précis by recasting (or re-writing) and there is précis by reduction. The literary ideal is perhaps a recast of the reduction ; if the reduction has been carefully made, it will need only a slight recasting.

For easy reading, it is advisable to break a long unparagraphed passage into paragraphs. Not arbitrarily, but according to the divisions of the subject : divisions that are determined by the subjects within the main subject. Never tinker with an already satisfactory paragraphing. And do not alter the order of the narrative (or the discourse or the letter or . . . )

unless the order is faulty. Remember that you are supposed not to be presenting yourself through the author, but to be representing the author. Do not show off by changing the ordonnance of a good writer : he knows better than you do how *he* wishes to treat the subject.

A certain Examining Board prefaces its to-be-précised passages with these instructions, which admirably establish what the resulting précis's should be : ‘Write a Précis giving clearly the substance of the following passage and presenting *in a consecutive and readable shape*, briefly and distinctly expressed, the main points of the argument [i.e. the theme], so that anyone who has not time to read the passage may learn the substance of it from the Précis.’

Here are two examples : the former (S.C. standard) is of précis by reduction ; the latter (Matriculation standard), of précis by recasting.

### *The Functions of the Cabinet*<sup>1</sup>

A German professor in a lecture on anatomy is reported to have said to his class, ‘Gentlemen, we come now to the spleen. About the functions of the spleen, gentlemen, we know nothing. So much for the spleen.’ It is with such feelings that one enters upon the task of writing a chapter upon the cabinet ; although that body has become more and more, decade by decade, the motive power of all political action. The fact is that the cabinet from its very nature can hardly have fixed traditions. In the first place, it has no legal status as an organ of government, but is an informal

<sup>1</sup> Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board's examination for School Certificate, July, 1937. With the Board's gracious permission.

body, unknown to the law, whose business it is to bring about a co-operation among the different forces of the state without interfering with their legal independence. Its action must, therefore, be of an informal character. Then it meets in secret, and no records of its proceedings are kept, which would in itself make very difficult the establishment and preservation of a tradition. This could, indeed, happen only in case of a certain permanence among the members who could learn and transmit its practice. But a new cabinet contains, under ordinary circumstances, none of the members of its predecessor. A Conservative minister knows nothing of the procedure under Liberal administrations ; and we find even a man of the experience of Sir Robert Peel asking Sir James Graham about the practice of a Liberal cabinet, of which that statesman—who at this time changed his party every decade—had formerly been a member. No doubt the mode of transacting business varies a good deal from one cabinet to another, depending to a great extent upon the personal qualities of the members. Still, the real nature of the work to be done, and hence the method of doing it, has changed during the last half century less in the case of the cabinet than of any of the other organs of the state, and one can observe certain general characteristics that may be noted.

The conventions of the constitution have limited and regulated the exercise of all legal powers by the regular organs of the state in such a way as to vest the main authority of the central government—the driving and the steering force—in the hands of a body entirely unknown to the law. The members of the cabinet are now always the holders of public offices created by law ; but their possession of those offices

by no means determines their activity as members of the cabinet. They have, indeed, two functions. Individually, as officials, they do the executive work of the state and administer its departments ; collectively they direct the general policy of the government, and this they do irrespective of their individual authority as officials. Their several administrative duties and their collective functions are quite distinct ; and may, in the case of a particular person, have little or no connection. The Lord Privy Seal, for example, has no administrative duties whatever ; and it is conceivable that the work of other members might not come before the cabinet during the whole life of the ministry.

The essential function of the cabinet is to co-ordinate and guide the political action of the different branches of the government and thus create a consistent policy. Bagehot called it a hyphen that joins, a buckle that fastens, the executive and legislative together ; and in another place he speaks of it as a committee of Parliament chosen to rule the nation. More strictly it is a committee of the party that has a majority in the House of Commons. The minority are not represented upon it, and in this it differs from every other parliamentary committee. The distinction is so obvious to us to-day, we are so accustomed to government by party wherever popular institutions prevail, that we are apt to forget the importance of the fact. Party government as a system has developed comparatively recently ; but it has now become almost universal.

LOWELL, *The Government of England.*

Here the version-by-reduction I made in July, 1937 :

*Functions of the Cabinet*

The Cabinet has become, increasingly, the motor of all political action. The Cabinet<sup>1</sup> can hardly have fixed traditions. Firstly, it has no legal status as an organ of government, but is an informal body, unknown to the law ; its business is to co-operate the different forces of the state without interfering with their legal independence. Its action, therefore, is informal. It meets secretly ; no records of its proceedings being kept, the establishment and preservation of a tradition is<sup>2</sup> difficult. This could, indeed, happen only with permanent members. But a new Cabinet normally contains none of the members of its predecessor. A Conservative minister knows nothing of the procedure under Liberal administrations ; and vice versa. The transaction of business varies from one Cabinet to another, according to the members' personalities. Still, the nature of the work to be done, hence the method, has changed during the last half century less in the Cabinet than in any other political organ : one can observe certain general characteristics.

The conventions of the Constitution have so limited and regulated the exercise of all legal powers by the regular organs of the state as to vest the main authority of the central government in a body unknown to the law. The members of the Cabinet are holders of offices created by law ; but their possession of those offices by no means determines their activity as members of the Cabinet. They have two functions. Individually, they do the executive work of the state and administer its departments ; collectively, they

<sup>1</sup> Not *It*, for *it* would be ambiguous.

<sup>2</sup> Or *are*.

direct the general policy of the government, irrespectively of their individual authority as officials.

The Cabinet's essential function is to co-ordinate and guide the political action of the different branches of the government. It is a committee of the party that has a majority in the House of Commons ; in this it significantly differs from every other parliamentary committee. It affords a remarkable illustration of party government, which, though developed comparatively recently, is now general.

The second passage :

### *Gatherations*

Several years ago, *Punch* ran a series of three articles on Group Terms, otherwise known as Company Nouns or, by the learned, Terms of Assemblage. And, in May last, Major C. E. Hare, in his invaluable book, *The Language of Sport*, gave a long list of them.

Originally, Company Nouns were connected with field sports, animals, birds, fishes ; so, still, are most of those Company Nouns which have survived ; an astonishing number of them have survived for nearly five centuries, as a glance at Dame Juliana Barnes's *The Book of St. Albans*, 1486, will show. Even there, however, we find a few quite general terms, unconnected with field sports and the creatures that were hunted. Some technical Company Nouns have become general currency ; such as a *flock* of sheep, a *herd* of cattle (Australians prefer *mob*, which word they apply in many incongruous ways), and a *pack* of hounds. But some delightful general Company Nouns have fallen into disuse ; for instance, a *blush* of boys,

a *boast* of soldiers, a *gaggle* of gossips, a *hastiness* of cooks, a *skulk* of thieves. This is a sad loss.

Certain moderns, however, have attempted to introduce Group Terms : with a courage and an ingenuity that have deserved a better fortune than they have experienced. Here are a few delights purveyed to us by *Punch* (per A. P. H., I wonder ?) : A *guzzle* of aldermen ; a *boodle* of company promoters ; a *stodge* of Conservatives and a *heckle* of Socialists ; a *frolic* of 'flappers' ; a *slink* of mannequins ; a *flutter* of spinsters ; a *fleece* of punters ; a *gush* of poets. Colonel R. J. Nicol, in *A Collection of Terms, denoting Assemblages*, 1933 (but, alas ! privately printed), coined the following felicities : A *condescension* of actors, a *giggle* of chorus-girls, a *blather* of generals (military, not domestic), a *futility* of husbands (as though they weren't sufficiently worried already !), a *muddle* of mayors. Soldiers appear to excel at this sort of thing, for in addition to Major C. E. Hare—'of whom, more anon', as the cliché-lovers say—there is Lieut.-Colonel C. Bartley-Dennis, to whom we owe 'an *emulsion* of doctors', 'an *unhappiness* of husbands' (well, well !), and the supreme appositeness of 'a *click* of chorus-girls'. Major Hare has increased the gaiety of nations by his contribution of the following 'assemblages' : A *surge* of bookmakers and a *riot* of boys ; a *saunter* of loafers ; a *charm* of fairies ; a *trace* of virgins, the Major being a trenchant satirist as well as a potential poet.

After the perfection of 'a *click* of chorus-girls', 'a *charm* of fairies', 'a *frolic* of flappers', and others, it may seem to be an impertinence in me to append a short list of my own inventions. But never let it be said that I'm not game—to be shot at and, if possible, brought down by the hunters.

Nationalities supply such Group Terms as the following :

- A *jaundice* of Chinese.
- A *courage* of Dutchmen.
- An *insularity* of Englishmen.
- A *pagoda* of Indians (Asiatic).
- An *adaptation* of Japanese.
- A *gloom* of Russians.
- A *generosity* of Scotchmen.
- A *delight* of Turks.
- An *eisteddfod* of Welshmen.

Society with a big and a little *s* is a very wide field ; a few gleanings will suffice.

- A *dampness* of babies.
- A *clutter* or a *jazz* of dancers.
- A *diffidence* of debutantes.
- A *daddy* of 'gold-diggers'.
- A *rapacity* of 'sweet young things'.

Now for the world's workers on the one hand, and on the other, the playboys (and girls). From the workers we select :

- An *accent* of announcers (radio).
- A *celerity* of aviators.
- A *botheration* of barbers.
- A *burning* of cooks.
- A *corner* of financiers.
- A *growth* of gardeners.
- A *surplus* of lawyers.
- An *undulation* of mannequins.
- A *neckerchief* of navvies.
- A *pot* of publicans.
- A *protection* of racketeers.
- A *margin* of stockbrokers.

A *see-saw* of surgeons.

An *apology* of telephone operators.

From the playboys (and their like) :

A *bareness* of bathers (seaside).

A *pavilion* of cricketers.

A *rush* of footballers.

A *hustle* of hikers.

A *service* of lawn-tennis players.

A *licence* of motorists.

And a few odds-and-ends, just to give an air of comprehensiveness to a very miscellaneous list :

An *elongation* of anglers.

A *highfalutin* of highbrows.

An *earthiness* of lowbrows.

A *proximity* of misers.

A *propaganda* of pacifists.

A *prosiness* of poets.

In the coining of Company Nouns, alliteration is occasionally helpful ; but far more important than alliteration is appositeness or point—or both. Whether directly or indirectly, one aims at a characteristic, above all at a failing, of the class or group that is to be named. One may be allusive, as in ‘an *honour* of thieves’, or frankly condemnatory, as in ‘a *tardiness* of taxi-drivers’, or even (apparently) inaccurate, as in ‘a *caste* of playwrights’. One may, in short, be one or more of many things : but never dull ; never stupid.

And here is a version, a re-writing, by the author.

### *Gatherations*

Many Company Nouns (otherwise Terms of Assemblage) have survived from the 15th Century ; some—

e.g. *flock* of sheep, *herd* of cattle—have become general currency, but others (e.g. a *gaggle* of gossips) have unfortunately fallen into disuse.

Since about 1920, there have been numerous attempts, courageous and ingenious, to introduce Company Nouns : from *Punch* come a *guzzle* of aldermen, a *stodge* of Conservatives, a *slink* of mannequins ; from Colonel R. J. Nicol, a *condescension* of actors, a *futility* of husbands, a *muddle* of mayors ; from Lieut.-Colonel C. Bartley-Dennis the supremely apposite *click* of chorus-girls ; and from Major C. E. Hare, a *charm* of fairies and a *saunter* of loafers.

After such felicities, it is perhaps impertinent in me to add even a few of my own inventions. Nationalities account for a *courage* of Dutchmen, an *insularity* of Englishmen, a *gloom* of Russians, a *delight* of Turks. Society for : a *clutter* or a *jazz* of dancers, and a *daddy* of ‘gold-diggers’. The world’s workers suggest an *accent* of announcers, a *burning* of cooks, a *corner* of financiers, a *growth* of gardeners, a *neckerchief* of navvies, a *protection* of racketeers, and an *apology* of telephone operators : contrast the playboys and their partners, e.g. a *bareness* of bathers (seaside), a *hustle* of hikers, a *licence* of motorists. Miscellanea provide an *elongation* of anglers, a *highfalutin* of highbrows, and a *propaganda* of pacifists.

In coining Company Nouns, one aims at point and appositeness ; alliteration is useful. One may be allusive (an *honour* of thieves) or condemnatory (a *tardiness* of taxi-drivers) ; but never dull.

\* \* \* \* \*

The only general instruction worth the paper on which it is printed, seems to be this :

Read the passage carefully two or three times ; make sure that you have grasped what the main theme is ; having determined the heads of the discourse, or the aspects of the subject, or the phases of the narrative, treat those heads or aspects or phases no more briefly than is required by the terms of the question—i.e. by the limits (say, 280-350 words) within which the précis is to be written.



## PASSAGES FOR PRÉCIS

(In the following passages, there will be found a sufficient variety to cover the normal range of passages set in School Certificate, Matriculation, and analogous examinations. I have avoided ‘stunts’.—THE EDITOR.)



## VOYAGE (1577-1580) OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

(*Richard Hakluyt*)

WE continuing our course fell the 29th of November in with an island called La Mocha, where we cast anchor ; and our General, hoisting out our boat, went with ten of our company to shore, where we found people, whom the cruel and extreme dealings of the Spaniards have forced, for their own safety and liberty, to flee from the main, and to fortify themselves in this island. We being on land, the people came down to us to the water side with show of great courtesy, bringing to us potatoes, roots, and two very fat sheep, which our General received, and gave them other things for them, and had promise to have water there : but the next day repairing again to the shore, and sending two men a-land with barrels to fill water, the people taking them for Spaniards (to whom they use to show no favour if they take them) laid violent hands on them, and, as we think, slew them.

Our General seeing this, stayed here no longer, but weighed anchor, and set sail towards the coast of Chili, and drawing towards it, we met near to the shore an Indian in a *canoa*, who thinking us to have been Spaniards, came to us and told us, that at a place called Santiago, there was a great Spanish ship laden from the kingdom of Peru ; for which good news our General gave him divers trifles, whereof he was glad, and went

along with us and brought us to the place, which is called the port of Valparaiso.

When we came thither we found, indeed, the ship riding at anchor, having in her eight Spaniards and three negroes ; who, thinking us to have been Spaniards, and their friends, welcomed us with a drum, and made ready a *botija* of wine of Chili to drink to us : but as soon as we were entered, one of our company called Thomas Moon began to lay about him, and struck one of the Spaniards, and said unto him, *Abaxo, perro !* that is in English, ‘ Go down, dog ! ’ One of these Spaniards, seeing persons of that quality in those seas . . . . crossed and blessed himself : but, to be short, we stowed them under hatches, all save one Spaniard, who suddenly and desperately leapt overboard into the sea, and swam ashore to the town of Santiago, to give them warning of our arrival.

They of the town, being not above nine households, presently fled away and abandoned the town. Our General manned his boat and the Spanish ship’s boat, and went to the town ; and, being come to it, we rifled it, and came to a small chapel, which we entered, and found therein a silver chalice, two cruets, and one altar-cloth, the spoil whereof our General gave to Master Fletcher, his minister.

We found also in this town a warehouse stored with wine of Chili and many boards of cedar-wood ; all which wine we brought away with us, and certain of the boards to burn for firewood : and so, being come aboard, we departed the haven, having first set all the Spaniards on land, saving one John Griego, a Greek born, whom our General carried with him as pilot to bring him into the haven of Lima.

When we were at sea our General rifled the ship,

and found in her good store of the wine of Chili, and 25,000 *pesos* of very pure and fine gold of Baldivia, amounting in value to 37,000 ducats of Spanish money, and above. So, going on our course, we arrived next at a place called Coquimbo, where our General sent fourteen of his men on land to fetch water : but they were espied by the Spaniards, who came with 300 horse-men and 200 footmen, and slew one of our men with a piece ; the rest came aboard in safety, and the Spaniards departed : we went on shore again and buried our man, and the Spaniards came down again with a flag of truce ; but we set sail, and would not trust them.

From hence we went to a certain port called Tara-paca ; where, being landed, we found by the seaside a Spaniard lying asleep, who had lying by him thirteen bars of silver, which weighed 4,000 ducats Spanish ; we took the silver and left the man.

Not far from hence, going on land for fresh water, we met with a Spaniard and an Indian boy driving eight *llamas* or sheep of Peru, which are as big as asses ; every of which sheep had on his back two bags of leather, each bag containing 50 lb. weight of fine silver : so that, bringing both the sheep and their burthen to the ships, we found in all the bags eight hundredweight of silver.

Herehence we sailed to a place called Arica ; and, being entered the port, we found there three small barks, which we rifled, and found in one of them fifty-seven wedges of silver, each of them weighing about 20 lb. weight, and every of these wedges were of the fashion and bigness of a brickbat. In all these three barks, we found not one person : for they, mistrusting no strangers, were all gone a-land to the town, which consisteth of about twenty houses ; which we would

have ransacked if our company had been better and more in number. But our General, contented with the spoil of the ships, left the town and put off again to sea, and set sail for Lima, and, by the way, met with a small bark, which he boarded, and found in her good store of linen cloth, whereof taking some quantity, he let her go.

To Lima we came the 13th day of February ; and, being entered the haven, we found there about twelve sail of ships lying fast moored at an anchor, having all their sails carried on shore ; for the masters and merchants were here most secure, having never been assaulted by enemies, and at this time feared the approach of none such as we were. Our General rifled these ships, and found in one of them a chest full of reals of plate, and good store of silks and linen cloth ; and took the chest into his own ship, and good store of the silks and linen. In which ship he had news of another ship called the *Cacafuego*, which was gone towards Payta, and that the same ship was laden with treasure : whereupon we stayed no longer here, but, cutting all the cables of the ships in the haven, we let them drive whither they would, either to sea or to the shore ; and with all speed we followed the *Cacafuego* toward Payta, thinking there to have found her : but before we arrived there she was gone from thence towards Panama ; whom our General still pursued, and by the way met with a bark laden with ropes and tackle for ships, which he boarded and searched, and found in her 80 lb. weight of gold, and a crucifix of gold with goodly great emeralds set in it, which he took, and some of the cordage also for his own ship.

## THE KINGDOM OF ENGLAND

*(Francis Bacon)*

FOR greatness (Mr. Speaker) I think a man may speak it soberly and without bravery, that this kingdom of England, having Scotland united, Ireland reduced, the sea provinces of the Low Countries contracted, and shipping maintained, is one of the greatest monarchies, in forces truly esteemed, that hath been in the world. For certainly the kingdoms here on earth have a resemblance with the kingdom of heaven, which our Saviour compareth not to any great kernel or nut, but to a very small grain, yet such a one as is apt to grow and spread. And such do I take to be the constitution of this kingdom, if indeed we shall refer our counsels to greatness and power, and not quench them too much with consideration of utility and wealth. For (Mr. Speaker) was it not, think you, a true answer that Solon of Greece made to the rich king Croesus of Lydia, when he showed unto him a great quantity of gold that he had gathered together, in ostentation of his greatness and might. But Solon said to him, contrary to his expectation, ‘ Why, sir, if another come that hath better iron than you, he will be lord of all your gold ’. Neither is the authority of Machiavel to be despised, who scorneth the proverb of estate taken first from a speech of Mucianus, that ‘ Moneys are the sinews of wars ’; and saith there are no true sinews of war but the very sinews of the arms of valiant men. Nay

more (Mr. Speaker), whosoever shall look into the seminary and beginnings of the monarchies of the world, he shall find them founded in poverty. Persia, a country barren and poor, in respect of the Medes whom they subdued. Macedon, a kingdom ignoble and mercenary, until the time of Philip the son of Amyntas. Rome had poor and pastoral beginnings. The Turks, a band of Sarmatian Scythes, that in a vagabond manner made impression upon that part of Asia which is yet called Turcomania ; out of which, after much variety of fortune, sprang the Ottoman family, now the terror of the world. So we know the Goths, Vandals, Alans, Huns, Lombards, Normans, and the rest of the northern people, in one age of the world made their descent or expedition upon the Roman empire, and came not as rovers to carry away prey and be gone again, but planted themselves in a number of fruitful and rich provinces, where not only their generations, but their names remain till this day ; witness Lombardy, Catalonia, a name compounded of Goth and Alane, Andaluzio, a name corrupted from Vandelicia, Hungary, Normandy, and others.

Nay, the fortune of the Swiss of late years, which are bred in a barren and mountainous country, is not to be forgotten, who first ruined the Duke of Burgundy, the same who had almost ruined the kingdom of France ; what time, after the battle of Grançon, the rich jewel of Burgundy, prized at many thousands, was sold for a few pence by a common Swiss, that knew no more what a jewel meant than did Aesop's cock. And again the same nation, in revenge of a scorn, was the ruin of the French king's affairs in Italy, Lewis the Twelfth. For that king, when he was pressed somewhat rudely by an agent of the Swiss to raise their

pensions, brake into words of choler : ‘What,’ said he, ‘will these villains of the mountains put a tax upon me?’ Which words lost him his duchy of Milan, and chased him out of Italy. All which examples (Mr. Speaker) do well prove Solon’s opinion of the authority and mastery that iron hath over gold. And therefore if I should speak unto you mine own heart, methinks we should a little disdain that the nation of Spain, which howsoever of late it hath grown to rule, yet of ancient times served many ages, first under Carthage, then under Rome, after under Saracens, Goths, and others, should of late years take unto themselves that spirit as to dream of a monarchy in the West, according to that device, *Video solem orientem in occidente*,<sup>1</sup> only because they have ravished from some wild and unarmed people mines and store of gold ; and on the other side, that this island of Brittany, seated and manned as it is, and that hath (I make no question) the best iron in the world, that is the best soldiers of the world, should think of nothing but reckonings and audits, and *meum* and *tuum*, and I cannot tell what.—*Speech in House of Commons*, Feb. 17, 1606–7.

<sup>1</sup> ‘I see the sun rising in the west.’

## THE STORMING OF TREDAH

(*Oliver Cromwell*)

Dublin, 17 Sept. 1649.

YOUR Army being safely arrived at Dublin ; and the Enemy endeavouring to draw all his forces together about Trim and Tecroghan, as my intelligence gave me,—from whence endeavours were made by the Marquis of Ormond to draw Owen Roe O'Neil with his forces to his assistance, but with what success I cannot yet learn,—I resolved, after some refreshment taken for our weather-beaten men and horses, and accommodations for a march, to take the field. And accordingly, upon Friday the 30th of August last, rendezvoused with eight regiments of foot, six of horse and some troops of dragoons, three miles on the north side of Dublin. The design was, To endeavour the regaining of Tredah ; or tempting the Enemy, upon his hazard of the loss of that place, to fight.

Your Army came before the Town upon Monday following. Where having pitched, as speedy course was taken as could be to frame our batteries ; which took up the more time because divers of the battering guns were on shipboard. Upon Monday the 9th of this instant, the batteries began to play. Whereupon I sent Sir Arthur Ashton, the then Governor, a summons, To deliver the Town to the use of the Parliament of England. To the which receiving no satisfactory answer, I proceeded that day to beat down the Steeple

of the Church on the south side of the Town, and to beat down a Tower not far from the same place, which you will discern by the Chart enclosed.

Our guns not being able to do much that day, it was resolved to endeavour to do our utmost the next day to make breaches assaultable, and by the help of God to storm them. The place pitched upon was that part of the Town-wall next a Church called St. Mary's ; which was the rather chosen because we did hope that if we did enter and possess that Church, we should be the better able to keep it against their horse and foot until we could make way for the entrance of our horse ; and we did not conceive that any part of the Town would afford the like advantage for that purpose with this. The batteries planted were two : one was for that part of the Wall against the east end of the said Church ; the other against the Wall on the south side. Being somewhat long in battering, the Enemy made six retrenchments : three of them from the said Church to Duleek Gate ; and three of them from the east end of the Church to the Town-wall and so backward. The guns, after some two or three hundred shot, beat down the corner Tower, and opened two reasonable good breaches in the east and south Wall.

Upon Tuesday the 10th of this instant, about five o'clock in the evening, we began the Storm : and after some hot dispute we entered, about seven or eight hundred men ; the Enemy disputing it very stiffly with us. And indeed, through the advantages of the place, and the courage God was pleased to give the defenders, our men were forced to retreat quite out of the breach, not without some considerable loss ; Colonel Castle being there shot in the head, whereof he presently died : and divers officers and soldiers

doing their duty killed and wounded. There was a Tenalia<sup>1</sup> to flanker the south Wall of the Town, between Duleek Gate and the corner Tower before mentioned ; —which our men entered, wherein they found some forty or fifty of the Enemy, which they put to the sword. And this [Tenalia] they held : but it being without the Wall, and the sally-port through the Wall into that Tenalia being choked up with some of the Enemy which were killed in it, it proved of no use for an entrance into the Town that way.

Although our men that stormed the breaches were forced to recoil, as is before expressed ; yet, being encouraged to recover their loss, they made a second attempt : wherein God was pleased so to animate them that they got ground of the Enemy, and by the goodness of God, forced him to quit his entrenchments. And after a very hot dispute, the Enemy having both horse and foot, and we only foot, within the Wall,—they gave ground, and our men became masters both of their retrenchments and [of] the Church ; which indeed, although they made our entrance the more difficult, yet they proved of excellent use to us ; so that the Enemy could not [now] annoy us with their horse, but thereby we had advantage to make good the ground, that so we might let in our own horse ; which accordingly was done, though with much difficulty.

Divers of the Enemy retreated into the Mill-Mount : a place very strong and of difficult access ; being exceedingly high, having a good graft,<sup>2</sup> and strongly palisadoed. The Governor, Sir Arthur Ashton, and

<sup>1</sup> Usually *tenail*, an outwork in the main ditch ; it is set in front of a curtain (a plain wall connecting two towers) between two bastions.

<sup>2</sup> Earthwork.

divers considerable Officers being there, our men getting up to them, were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the Town : and, I think, that night they put to the sword about 2,000 men :—divers of the officers and soldiers being fled over the Bridge into the other part of the Town, where about 100 of them possessed St. Peter's Church-steeple, some the west Gate, and others a strong Round Tower next the Gate called St. Sunday's. These being summoned to yield to mercy, refused. Whereupon I ordered the steeple of St. Peter's Church to be fired, when one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames : ‘ God damn me, God confound me ; I burn, I burn ’.

The next day, the other two Towers were summoned ; in one of which was about six or seven score ; but they refused to yield themselves : and we knowing that hunger must compel them, set only good guards to secure them from running away until their stomachs were come down. From one of the said Towers, notwithstanding their condition, they killed and wounded some of our men. When they submitted, their officers were knocked on the head, and every tenth man of the soldiers killed ; and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes. The soldiers in the other Tower were all spared, as to their lives only ; and shipped likewise for the Barbadoes.

## THE GOOD SCHOOLMASTER<sup>1</sup>

(*Thomas Fuller*)

THERE is scarce any profession in the commonwealth more necessary, which is so slightly performed. The reasons whereof I conceive to be these : First, Young scholars make this calling their refuge ; yea, perchance, before they have taken any degree in the University, commence schoolmasters in the country, as if nothing else were required to set up this profession but only a rod and a ferula. Secondly, Others who are able, use it only as a passage to better preferment, to patch the rents in their present fortune, till they can provide a new one, and betake themselves to some more gainful calling. Thirdly, They are disheartened from doing their best with the miserable reward which in some places they receive, being masters to the children, and slaves to their parents. Fourthly, Being grown rich, they grow negligent, and scorn to touch the school, but by the proxy of the usher. But see how well our schoolmaster behaves himself.

1. *His genius inclines him with delight to his profession.* Some men had as lieve be schoolboys as schoolmasters, to be tied to the school as Cooper's *Dictionary* and Scapula's *Lexicon* are chained to the desk therein ; and though great scholars, and skilful in other arts, are bunglers in this : but God of his goodness hath fitted several men for several callings, that the necessity of

<sup>1</sup> Not nearly so difficult as it at first appears to be.

church and state, in all conditions, may be provided for. So that he who beholds the fabric thereof may say, God hewed out this stone, and appointed it to lie in this very place, for it would fit none other so well, and here it doth most excellent. And thus God mouldeth some for a schoolmaster's life, undertaking it with desire and delight, and discharging it with dexterity and happy success.

2. *He studieth his scholars' natures as carefully as they their books*; and ranks their dispositions into several forms. And though it may seem difficult for him in a great school to descend to all particulars, yet experienced schoolmasters may quickly make a grammar of boys' natures, and reduce them all, saving some few exceptions, to these general rules :

1. Those that are ingenious and industrious. The conjunction of two such planets in a youth presage much good unto him. To such a lad a frown may be a whipping, and a whipping a death ; yea, where their master whips them once, shame whips them all the week after. Such natures he useth with all gentleness.
2. Those that are ingenious and idle. These think, with the hare in the fable, that, running with snails (so they count the rest of their school-fellows), they shall come soon enough to the post, though sleeping a good while before their starting. Oh, a good rod would finely take them napping !
3. Those that are dull and diligent. Wines, the stronger they be, the more lees they have when they are new. Many boys are muddy-headed till they be clarified with age, and such afterwards prove the best. Bristol diamonds are

both bright, and squared and pointed by nature, and yet are soft and worthless ; whereas orient ones in India are rough and rugged naturally. Hard, rugged, and dull natures of youth acquit themselves afterwards the jewels of the country, and therefore their dullness at first is to be borne with, if they be diligent. That schoolmaster deserves to be beaten himself, who beats nature in a boy for a fault. And I question whether all the whipping in the world can make their parts which are naturally sluggish, rise one minute before the hour nature hath appointed.

4. Those that are invincibly dull, and negligent also.

Correction may reform the latter, not amend the former. All the whetting in the world can never set a razor's edge on that which hath no steel in it. Such boys he consigneth over to other professions. Shipwrights and boatmakers will choose those crooked pieces of timber which other carpenters refuse. Those may make excellent merchants and mechanics which will not serve for scholars.

3. *He is able, diligent, and methodical in his teaching ;* not leading them rather in a circle than forwards. He minces his precepts for children to swallow, hanging clogs on the nimbleness of his own soul, that his scholars may go along with him.

4. *He is, and will be known to be, an absolute monarch in his school.* If cockering mothers proffer him money to purchase their sons an exemption from his rod (to live as it were in a peculiar, out of their master's jurisdiction) with disdain he refuseth it, and scorns the late custom in some places of commuting whipping into money, and ransoming boys from the rod at a set

price. If he hath a stubborn youth, correction-proof, he debaseth not his authority by contesting with him, but fairly if he can puts him away before his obstinacy hath infected others.

5. <sup>1</sup> *He is moderate in inflicting deserved correction.* Many a schoolmaster better answereth the name *παιδοτρίβης* than *παιδαγωγός*, rather tearing his scholars flesh with whipping, than giving them good education. No wonder if his scholars hate the Muses, being presented unto them in the shapes of fiends and furies. Junius complains *de insolenti carnificina* of his schoolmaster, by whom *conscindebatur flagris septies aut octies in dies singulos*. Yea, hear the lamentable verses of poor Tusser in his own life :

From Pauls I went, to Eton sent,  
To learn straightways the Latin phrase,  
Where fifty-three stripes given to me  
At once I had.

For fault but small, or none at all,  
It came to pass thus beat I was ;  
See, Udal, see the mercy of thee  
To me, poor lad.

Such an Orbilius mars more scholars than he makes. Their tyranny hath caused many tongues to stammer, which spake plain by nature, and whose stuttering at first was nothing else but fears quavering on their speech at their master's presence ; and whose mauling them about their heads hath dulled those who in quickness exceeded their master.

6. *He makes his school free to him who sues to him in forma pauperis.* And surely learning is the greatest

<sup>1</sup> ‘ Little Latin and less Greek ’ makes no matter ; one can easily overcome the obstacle of one’s ignorance. (THE EDITOR.)

alms that can be given. But he is a beast, who because the poor scholar cannot pay him his wages, pays the scholar in his whipping. Rather are diligent lads to be encouraged with all excitements to learning. This minds me of what I have heard concerning Mr. Bust, that worthy late schoolmaster of Eton, who would never suffer any wandering begging scholar (such as justly the statute hath ranked in the forefront of rogues) to come into his school, but would thrust him out with earnestness, however privately charitable unto him, lest his schoolboys should be disheartened from their books, by seeing some scholars after their studying in the University preferred to beggary.

7. *He spoils not a good school to make thereof a bad college*, therein to teach his scholars logic. For besides that Logic may have an action of trespass against Grammar for encroaching on her liberties, syllogisms are solecisms taught in the school, and oftentimes they are forced afterwards in the University to unlearn the fumbling skill they had before.

8. *Out of his school he is no whit pedantical in carriage or discourse*, contenting himself to be rich in Latin, though he doth not jingle with it in every company wherein he comes.

To conclude, let this amongst other motives make schoolmasters careful in their place, that the eminences of their scholars have commended the memories of their schoolmasters to posterity, who otherwise in obscurity had altogether been forgotten. Who had ever heard of R. Bond in Lancashire but for the breeding of learned Ascham his scholar ? or of Hartgrave in Brundly school in the same county, but because he was the first did teach worthy Dr. Whitaker ? Nor do I honour the memory of Mulcaster for anything so much as for his

scholar, that gulf of learning, Bishop Andrewes. This made the Athenians, the day before the great feast of Theseus their founder, to sacrifice a ram to the memory of Conidas his schoolmaster that first instructed him.—*Holy and Profane State.*

## A TRIMMER

*(George Savile, Marquess of Halifax)*

OUR Trimmer is so fully satisfied of the truth of those principles by which he is directed in reference to the public, that he will neither be bawled, threatened, laughed, nor drunk out of them ; and instead of being converted by the arguments of his adversaries to their opinions, he is very much confirmed in his own by them ; he professeth solemnly that were it in his power to choose, he would rather have his ambition bounded by the commands of a great and wise master, than let it range with a popular license, though crowned with success ; yet he cannot commit such a sin against the glorious thing called Liberty, nor let his soul stoop so much below itself, as to be content without repining to have his reason wholly subdued, or the privilege of acting like a sensible creature torn from him by the imperious dictates of unlimited authority, in what hand soever it happens to be placed. What is there in this that is so criminal, as to deserve the penalty of that most singular apophthegm, ‘A Trimmer is worse than a rebel’ ? What do angry men ail, to rail so against moderation ? Doth it not look as if they were going to some very scurvy extreme, that is too strong to be digested by the more considering part of mankind ? These arbitrary methods, besides the injustice of them, are, God be thanked, very unskilful too ; for they fright the birds, by talking so loud, from

coming into the nets that are laid for them ; and when men agree to rifle a house, they seldom give warning, or blow a trumpet ; but there are some small statesmen, who are so full charged with their own expectations, that they cannot contain.<sup>1</sup> And kind Heaven, by sending such a seasonable curse upon their undertakings, hath made their ignorance an antidote against their malice ; some of these cannot treat peaceably ; yielding will not satisfy them, they will have men by storm ; there are others that must have plots to make their service more necessary, and have an interest to keep them alive, since they are to live upon them ; and persuade the king to retrench his own greatness, so as to shrink into the head of a party, which is the betraying him into such an unprincely mistake, and to such a wilful diminution of himself, that they are the last enemies he ought to allow himself to forgive. Such men, if they could, would prevail with the sun to shine only upon them and their friends, and to leave all the rest of the world in the dark. This is a very unusual monopoly, and may come within the equity of the law, which makes it treason to imprison the king, when such unfitting bounds are put to his favour, and he confined to the narrow limits of a particular set of men, that would enclose him ; these honest and only loyal gentlemen, if they may be allowed to bear witness for themselves, make a king their engine, and degrade him into a property, at the very time that their flattery would make him believe they paid divine worship to him. Besides these, there is a flying squadron on both sides, that are afraid the world should agree, small dabblers in conjuring, that raise angry apparitions to keep men from being reconciled,

<sup>1</sup> Restrain themselves.

like wasps that fly up and down, buzz and sting to keep men unquiet ; but these insects are commonly short-lived creatures, and no doubt in a little time mankind will be rid of them. They were giants at least who fought once against heaven, but for such pygmies as these to contend against it, is such a provoking folly, that the insolent bunglers ought to be laughed and hissed out of the world for it. They should consider, there is a soul in that great body of the people, which may for a time be drowsy and unactive, but when the leviathan is roused, it moveth like an angry creature, and will neither be convinced nor resisted. The people can never agree to show their united powers, till they are extremely tempted and provoked to it ; so that to apply cupping-glasses to a great beast naturally disposed to sleep, and to force the tame thing, whether it will or no, to be valiant, must be learnt out of some other book than Machiavel, who would never have prescribed such a preposterous method. It is to be remembered, that if princes have law and authority on their sides, the people on theirs may have Nature, which is a formidable adversary. Duty, Justice, Religion, nay, even human prudence too, biddeth the people suffer anything rather than resist ; but uncorrected Nature, where'er it feels the smart, will run to the nearest remedy. Men's passions, in this case, are to be considered as well as their duty, let it be never so strongly enforced ; for if their passions are provoked, they being as much a part of us as our limbs, they lead men into a short way of arguing, that admitteth no distinction ; and from the foundation of self-defence, they will draw inferences that will have miserable effects upon the quiet of a government.

Our Trimmer therefore dreads a general discontent,

because he thinketh it differeth from a rebellion, only as a spotted fever doth from the plague, the same species under a lower degree of malignity ; it worketh several ways, sometimes like a slow poison that hath its effects at a great distance from the time it was given ; sometimes like dry flax prepared to catch at the first fire, or like seed in the ground ready to sprout upon the first shower : in every shape 'tis fatal, and our Trimmer thinks no pains or precaution can be so great as to prevent it.

In short, he thinketh himself in the right, grounding his opinion upon that truth, which equally hateth to be under the oppressions of wrangling sophistry of the one hand, or the short dictates of mistaken authority on the other.

Our Trimmer adoreth the goddess Truth, though in all ages she hath been scurvily used, as well as those that worshipped her : 'tis of late become such a ruining virtue, that Mankind seemeth to be agreed to commend and avoid it ; yet the want of practice, which repealeth the other laws, hath no influence upon the law of truth, because it hath root in Heaven, and an intrinsic value in itself, that can never be impaired : she showeth her greatness in this, that her enemies, even when they are successful, are ashamed to own it. Nothing but powerful truth hath the prerogative of triumphing, not only after victories, but in spite of them, and to put conquest herself out of countenance. She may be kept under and suppressed, but her dignity still remaineth with her, even when she is in chains. Falsehood, with all her impudence, hath not enough to speak ill of her before her face : such majesty she carrieth about her, that her most prosperous enemies are fain to whisper their treason ; all the power upon

earth can never extinguish her : she hath lived in all ages ; and let the mistaken zeal of prevailing authority christen any opposition to it with what name they please, she maketh it not only an ugly and unmannerly, but a dangerous thing to persist : she hath lived very retired indeed, nay, sometime so buried, that only some few of the discerning part of mankind could have a glimpse of her ; with all that, she hath eternity in her, she knoweth not how to die, and from the darkest clouds that shade and cover her, she breaketh from time to time with triumph for her friends, and terror to her enemies.

Our Trimmer, therefore, inspired by this divine virtue, thinketh fit to conclude with these assertions, that our climate is a Trimmer, between that part of the world where men are roasted, and the other where they are frozen : that our church is a Trimmer, between the frenzy of platonic visions, and the lethargic ignorance of popish dreams : that our laws are Trimmers, between the excess of unbounded power, and the extravagance of liberty not enough restrained : that true virtuc hath ever been thought a Trimmer, and to have its dwelling in the middle between the two extremes : that even God Almighty himself is divided between his two great attributes, his Mercy and his Justice.

In such company, our Trimmer is not ashamed of his name, and willingly leaveth to the bold champions of either extreme, the honour of contending with no less adversaries than Nature, Religion, Liberty, Prudence, Humanity, and Common Sense.—*The Character of a Trimmer.*

## READING

(*John Locke*)

THIS is that which I think great readers are apt to be mistaken in. Those who have read of everything are thought to understand everything too ; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge ; it is thinking makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections ; unless we chew them over again, they will not give us strength and nourishment. There are indeed in some writers visible instances of deep thoughts, close and acute reasoning, and ideas well pursued. The light these would give would be of great use if their readers would observe and imitate them ; all the rest at best are but particulars fit to be turned into knowledge, but that can be done only by our own meditation, and examining the reach, force, and coherence of what is said ; and then, as far as we apprehend and see the connexion of ideas, so far it is ours ; without that, it is but so much loose matter floating in our brain. The memory may be stored, but the judgement is little better, and the stock of knowledge not increased, by being able to repeat what others have said or produce the arguments we have found in them. Such a knowledge as this is but knowledge by hearsay, and the ostentation of it is at best but talking by rote, and very often upon weak and

wrong principles. For all that is to be found in books is not built upon true foundations, nor always rightly deduced from the principles it is pretended to be built on. Such an examen as is requisite to discover that, every reader's mind is not forward to make ; especially in those who have given themselves up to a party, and only hunt for what they can scrape together that may favour and support the tenets of it. Such men wilfully exclude themselves from truth and from all true benefit to be received by reading. Others of more indifference often want attention and industry. The mind is backward in itself to be at the pains to trace every argument to its original, and to see upon what basis it stands, and how firmly ; but yet it is this that gives so much the advantage to one man more than another in reading. The mind should, by severe rules, be tied down to this at first uneasy task ; use and exercise will give it facility. So that those who are accustomed to it, readily, as it were with one cast of the eye, take a view of the argument, and presently, in most cases, see where it bottoms. Those who have got this faculty, one may say, have got the true key of books, and the clue to lead them through the mizmaze of variety of opinions and authors to truth and certainty. This young beginners should be entered in, and showed the use of, that they might profit by their reading. Those who are strangers to it will be apt to think it too great a clog in the way of men's studies, and they will suspect they shall make but small progress, if, in the books they read, they must stand to examine and unravel every argument and follow it step by step up to its original.

I answer, this is a good objection, and ought to weigh with those whose reading is designed for much talk

and little knowledge, and I have nothing to say to it. But I am here inquiring into the conduct of the understanding in its progress towards knowledge ; and to those who aim at that, I may say that he, who fair and softly goes steadily forward in a course that points right, will sooner be at his journey's end, than he that runs after every one he meets, though he gallop all day full speed.

To which let me add, that this way of thinking on and profiting by what we read will be a clog and rub to any one only in the beginning ; when custom and exercise has made it familiar, it will be dispatched in most occasions, without resting or interruption in the course of our reading. The motions and views of a mind exercised that way are wonderfully quick ; and a man, used to such sort of reflections, sees as much at one glimpse as would require a long discourse to lay before another and make out in an entire and gradual deduction. Besides that, when the first difficulties are over, the delight and sensible advantage it brings mightily encourages and enlivens the mind in reading, which without this is very improperly called study.—*Of the Conduct of the Understanding.*

## SEVERAL ENGLISH INSTITUTIONS

(*Jonathan Swift*)

I BEGAN my discourse, by informing his Majesty, that our dominions consisted of two islands, which composed three mighty kingdoms under one sovereign, besides our plantations in America. I dwelt long upon the fertility of our soil, and the temperature of our climate. I then spoke at large upon the constitution of an English Parliament, partly made up of an illustrious body, called the House of Peers, persons of the noblest blood, and of the most ancient and ample patrimonies. I described that extraordinary care always taken of their education in arts and arms, to qualify them for being counsellors both to the king and kingdom ; to have a share in the Legislature ; to be members of the highest court of judicature, from whence there could be no appeal ; and to be champions always ready for the defence of their prince and country, by their valour, conduct, and fidelity. That these were the ornament and bulwark of the kingdom, worthy followers of their most renowned ancestors, whose honour had been the reward of their virtue from which their posterity were never once known to degenerate. To these were joined several holy persons, as part of that assembly, under the title of bishops, whose peculiar business it is to take care of religion, and of those who instruct the people therein. These were searched and sought out through

the whole nation, by the prince and his wisest counsellors, among such of the priesthood as were most deservedly distinguished by the sanctity of their lives, and the depth of their erudition, who were, indeed, the spiritual fathers of the clergy and the people.

That the other part of the Parliament consisted of an assembly called the House of Commons, who were all principal gentlemen, freely picked and culled out by the people themselves, for their great abilities, and love of their country, to represent the wisdom of the whole nation. And these two bodies make up the most august assembly in Europe, to whom, in conjunction with the prince, the whole Legislature is committed.

I then descended to the courts of justice, over which the judges, those venerable sages and interpreters of the law, presided, for determining the disputed rights and properties of men, as well as for the punishment of vice, and protection of innocence. I mentioned the prudent management of our Treasury, the valour and achievements of our forces by sea and land. I computed the number of our people, by reckoning how many millions there might be of each religious sect, or political party among us. I did not omit even our sports and pastimes, or any other particular which I thought might redound to the honour of my country. And I finished all with a brief historical account of affairs and events in England for about an hundred years past.

This conversation was not ended under five audiences, each of several hours ; and the king heard the whole with great attention, frequently taking notes of what I spoke, as well as memorandums of several questions he intended to ask me.

When I had put an end to these long discourses, his Majesty, in a sixth audience, consulting his notes, proposed many doubts, queries, and objections upon every article. He asked what methods were used to cultivate the minds and bodies of our young nobility, and in what kind of business they commonly spent the first and teachable part of their lives. What course was taken to supply that assembly when any noble family became extinct. What qualifications were necessary in those who are to be created new lords : whether the humour of the prince, a sum of money to a court lady, or a prime minister, or a design of strengthening a party opposite to the public interest, ever happened to be motives in those advancements. What share of knowledge these lords had in the laws of their country, and how they came by it, so as to enable them to decide the properties of their fellow-subjects in their last resort. Whether they were always so free from avarice, partialities or want, that a bribe, or some other sinister view, could have no place among them. Whether those holy lords I spoke of, were always promoted to that rank upon account of their knowledge in religious matters, and the sanctity of their lives, had never been compliers with the times, while they were common priests, or slavish prostitute chaplains to some nobleman, whose opinions they continued servilely to follow, after they were admitted into that assembly.

He then desired to know what arts were practised in electing those whom I called commoners : whether a stranger, with a strong purse, might not influence the vulgar voters to choose him before their own landlord, or the most considerable gentleman in the neighbourhood. How it came to pass, that people

were so violently bent upon getting into this assembly, which I allowed to be a great trouble and expense, often to the ruin of their families, without any salary or pension : because that appeared such an exalted strain of virtue and public spirit, that his Majesty seemed to doubt it might possibly not be always sincere : and he desired to know whether such zealous gentlemen could have any views of refunding themselves for the charges and trouble they were at, by sacrificing the public good to the designs of a weak and vicious prince, in conjunction with a corrupted ministry. He multiplied his questions, and sifted me thoroughly upon every part of this head, proposing numberless enquiries and objections, which I think it not prudent or convenient to repeat.

Upon what I said in relation to our courts of justice, his Majesty desired to be satisfied in several points : and this I was the better able to do, having been formerly almost ruined by a long suit in chancery, which was decreed for me with costs. He asked what time was usually spent in determining between right and wrong, and what degree of expense. Whether advocates and orators had liberty to plead in causes manifestly known to be unjust, vexatious, or oppressive. Whether party in religion or politics was observed to be of any weight in the scale of justice. Whether those pleading orators were persons educated in the general knowledge of equity, or only in provincial, national, and other local customs. Whether they or their judges had any part in penning those laws which they assumed the liberty of interpreting and glossing upon at their pleasure. Whether they had ever at different times pleaded for and against the same cause, and cited precedents to prove contrary

opinions. Whether they were a rich or a poor corporation. Whether they received any pecuniary reward for pleading or delivering their opinions. And particularly, whether they were ever admitted as members in the lower senate.—*Gulliver's Travels.*

## STORY-TELLING

(*Sir Richard Steele*)

TOM LIZARD told us a story the other day, of some persons which our family know very well, with so much humour and life, that it caused a great deal of mirth at the tea-table. His brother Will, the Templar, was highly delighted with it, and the next day being with some of his Inns-of-Court acquaintance, resolved (whether out of the benevolence, or the pride of his heart, I will not determine) to entertain them with what he called ‘a pleasant humour enough’. I was in great pain for him when I heard him begin, and was not at all surprised to find the company very little moved by it. Will blushed, looked round the room, and with a forced laugh, ‘Faith, gentlemen,’ said he, ‘I do not know what makes you look so grave, it was an admirable story when I heard it’.

When I came home I fell into a profound contemplation upon story-telling, and as I have nothing so much at heart as the good of my country, I resolved to lay down some precautions upon this subject.

I have often thought that a story-teller is born, as well as a poet. It is, I think, certain, that some men have such a peculiar cast of mind, that they see things in another light, than men of grave dispositions. Men of a lively imagination, and a mirthful temper, will represent things to their hearers in the same manner as they themselves were affected with them ; and

whereas serious spirits might perhaps have been disgusted at the sight of some odd occurrences in life ; yet the very same occurrences shall please them in a well-told story, where the disagreeable parts of the images are concealed, and those only which are pleasing exhibited to the fancy. Story-telling is therefore not an art, but what we call a ‘knack’ ; it doth not so much subsist upon wit as upon humour ; and I will add, that it is not perfect without proper gesticulations of the body, which naturally attend such merry emotions of the mind. I know very well, that a certain gravity of countenance sets some stories off to advantage, where the hearer is to be surprised in the end ; but this is by no means a general rule ; for it is frequently convenient to aid and assist by cheerful looks, and whimsical agitations. I will go yet further, and affirm that the success of a story very often depends upon the make of the body, and formation of the features, of him who relates it. I have been of this opinion ever since I criticized upon the chin of Dick Dewlap. I very often had the weakness to repine at the prosperity of his conceits, which made him pass for a wit with the widow at the coffee-house, and the ordinary mechanics that frequent it ; nor could I myself forbear laughing at them most heartily, though upon examination I thought most of them very flat and insipid. I found after some time, that the merit of his wit was founded upon the shaking of a fat paunch, and the tossing up of a pair of rosy jowls. Poor Dick had a fit of sickness, which robbed him of his fat and his fame at once ; and it was full three months before he regained his reputation, which rose in proportion to his floridity. He is now very jolly and ingenious, and hath a good constitution for wit.

Those, who are thus adorned with the gifts of nature, are apt to show their parts with too much ostentation : I would therefore advise all the professors of this art never to tell stories but as they seem to grow out of the subject-matter of the conversation, or as they serve to illustrate, or enliven it. Stories, that are very common, are generally irksome ; but may be aptly introduced, provided they be only hinted at, and mentioned by way of allusion. Those, that are altogether new, should never be ushered in, without a short and pertinent character of the chief persons concerned ; because, by that means, you make the company acquainted with them ; and it is a certain rule, that slight and trivial accounts of those who are familiar to us administer more mirth, than the brightest points of wit in unknown characters. A little circumstance, in the complexion or dress of the man you are talking of, sets his image before the hearer, if it be chosen aptly for the story. Thus, I remember Tom Lizard, after having made his sisters merry with an account of a formal old man's way of complimenting, owned very frankly, that his story would not have been worth one farthing, if he had made the hat of him whom he represented one inch narrower. Besides the marking distinct characters, and selecting pertinent circumstances, it is likewise necessary to leave off in time, and end smartly. So that there is a kind of drama in the forming of a story, and the manner of conducting and pointing it, is the same as in an epigram. It is a miserable thing, after one hath raised the expectation of the company by humourous characters, and a pretty conceit, to pursue the matter too far. There is no retreating, and how poor is it for a story-teller to end his relation by saying, 'that's all ! '

As the choosing of pertinent circumstances is the life of a story, and that wherein humour principally consists ; so the collectors of impertinent particulars are the very bane and opiates of conversation. Old men are great transgressors this way. Poor Ned Poppy—he's gone—was a very honest man, but was so excessively tedious over his pipe, that he was not to be endured. He knew so exactly what they had for dinner, when such a thing happened ; in what ditch his bay stone-horse had his sprain at that time, and how his man John,—no ! it was William, started a hare in the common-field ; that he never got to the end of his tale. Then he was extremely particular in marriages and inter-marriages, and cousins twice or thrice removed ; and whether such a thing happened at the latter end of July, or the beginning of August. He had a marvellous tendency likewise to digressions ; insomuch that if a considerable person was mentioned in his story, he would straightway launch out into an episode on him ; and again, if in that person's story he had occasion to remember a third man, he broke off, and gave us his history, and so on. He always put me in mind of what Sir William Temple informs us of the tale-tellers in the north of Ireland, who are hired to tell stories of giants and enchanters to lull people asleep. These historians are obliged, by their bargain, to go on without stopping ; so that after the patient hath by this benefit enjoyed a long nap, he is sure to find the operator proceeding in his work. Ned procured the like effect in me the last time I was with him. As he was in the third hour of his story, and very thankful that his memory did not fail him, I fairly nodded in the elbow chair. He was much affronted at this, till I told him,

‘Old friend, you have your infirmity, and I have mine’.

But of all evils in story-telling, the humour of telling tales one after another, in great numbers, is the least supportable. Sir Harry Pandolf and his son gave my lady Lizard great offence in this particular. Sir Harry hath what they call a string of stories, which he tells over every Christmas. When our family visits there, we are constantly, after supper, entertained with the Glastonbury Thorn. When we have wondered at that a little, ‘Ay, but, father,’ saith the son, ‘let us have the spirit in the wood’. After that hath been laughed at, ‘Ay, but, father,’ cries the booby again, ‘tell us how you served the robber’. ‘Alack-a-day,’ saith Sir Harry, with a smile, and rubbing his forehead, ‘I have almost forgot that: but it is a pleasant conceit, to be sure.’ Accordingly he tells that and twenty more in the same independent order; and without the least variation, at this day, as he hath done, to my knowledge, ever since the revolution. I must not forget a very odd compliment that Sir Harry always makes my lady when he dines here. After dinner he strokes his belly, and says with a feigned concern in his countenance, ‘Madam, I have lost by you to-day’. ‘How so, Sir Harry?’ replies my lady. ‘Madam,’ says he, ‘I have lost an excellent stomach.’ At this, his son and heir laughs immoderately, and winks upon Mrs. Annabella. This is the thirty-third time that Sir Harry hath been thus arch, and I can bear it no longer.

As the telling of stories is a great help and life to conversation, I always encourage them, if they are pertinent and innocent; in opposition to those gloomy mortals, who disdain everything but matter of fact. Those grave fellows are my aversion, who sift every-

thing with the utmost nicety, and find the malignity of a lie in a piece of humour, pushed a little beyond exact truth. I likewise have a poor opinion of those, who have got a trick of keeping a steady countenance, that cock their hats, and look glum when a pleasant thing is said, and ask, ‘ Well ! and what then ? ’ Men of wit and parts should treat one another with benevolence : and I will lay it down as a maxim, that if you seem to have a good opinion of another man’s wit, he will allow you to have judgement.—*The Guardian.*

## TRAVEL IN WAR TIME

(*Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*)

Brescia, 23 Aug. n.s. [1746].

You will be surprised at the date of this letter, but Avignon has been long disagreeable to me on many accounts, and now more than ever, from the concourse of Scotch and Irish rebels that choose it for their refuge, and are so highly protected by the vice-legate, that it is impossible to go into any company without hearing a conversation that is improper to be listened to, and dangerous to contradict. The war with France hindered my settling there for reasons I have already told you ; and the difficulty of passing into Italy confined me, though I was always watching an opportunity of returning thither. Fortune at length presented me one.

I believe I wrote you word, when I was at Venice, that I saw there the Count of Wackerbarth, who was governor to the Prince of Saxony, and is favourite of the King of Poland, and the many civilities I received from him, as an old friend of his mother's. About a month since came to Avignon, a gentleman of the bedchamber of the prince, who is a man of the first quality in this province, I believe charged with some private commission from the Polish court. He brought me a letter of recommendation from Count Wackerbarth, which engaged me to show him what civilities lay in my power. In conversation I lamented to him the impossibility of my attempting a journey to Italy, where he was going. He offered me his protection

and represented to me that if I would permit him to wait on me, I might pass under the notion of a Venetian lady. In short, I ventured upon it, which has succeeded very well, though I met with more impediments in my journey than I expected. We went by sea to Genoa, where I made a very short stay, and saw nobody, having no passport from that state, and fearing to be stopped, if I was known. We took post-chaises from thence the 16th of this month, and were very much surprised to meet, on the Briletta, or Pochetta, the baggage of the Spanish army, with a prodigious number of sick and wounded soldiers and officers, who marched in a very great hurry. The Count of Palazzo ordered his servants to say we were in haste for the service of Don Philip, and without further examination they gave us place everywhere ; notwithstanding which, the multitude of carriages and loaded mules which we met in these narrow roads, made it impossible for us to reach Scravalli till it was near night. Our surprise was great to find, coming out of that town, a large body of troops surrounding a body of guards, in the midst of which was Don Philip in person, going a very round trot, looking down, and pale as ashes. The army was in too much confusion to take notice of us, and the night favouring us, we got into the town, but, when we came there, it was impossible to find any lodgings, all the inns being filled with wounded Spaniards. The Count went to the governor, and asked a chamber for a Venetian lady, which he granted very readily ; but there was nothing in it but the bare walls, and in less than a quarter of an hour after the whole house was empty both of furniture and people, the governor flying into the citadel, and carrying with him all his goods and

family. We were forced to pass the night without beds or supper. About daybreak the victorious Germans entered the town. The Count went to wait on the generals, to whom, I believe, he had a commission. He told them my name, and there was no sort of honour or civility they did not pay me. They immediately ordered me a guard of hussars (which was very necessary in the present disorder), and sent me refreshments of all kinds. Next day I was visited by the Prince of Badin Dourlach, the Prince Loüesten, and all the principal officers, with whom I passed for a heroine, showing no uneasiness, though the cannon of the citadel (where was a Spanish garrison) played very briskly. I was forced to stay there two days for want of post-horses, the postmaster being fled, with all his servants, and the Spaniards having seized all the horses they could find. At length I set out from thence the 19th instant, with a strong escort of hussars, meeting with no further accident on the road, except at the little town of Vogherra, where they refused post-horses, till the hussars drew their sabres. The 20th I arrived safe here. It is a very pretty place, where I intend to repose myself at least during the remainder of the summer. This journey has been very expensive ; but I am very glad I have made it. I am now in a neutral country, under the protection of Venice. The Doge is our old friend Grimani, and I do not doubt meeting with all sort of civility. When I set out I had so bad a fluxion on my eyes, I was really afraid of losing them : they are now quite recovered, and my health better than it has been for some time. I hope yours continues good, and that you will always take care of it. Direct for me at Brescia by way of Venice.

## AFFECTATION

(*The Earl of Chesterfield*)

Most people complain of fortune, few of nature ; and the kinder they think the latter has been to them, the more they murmur at what they call the injustice of the former.

Why have not I the riches, the rank, the power, of such and such, is the common expostulation with fortune : but why have not I the merit, the talents, the wit, or the beauty of such and such others, is a reproach rarely or never made to nature.

The truth is, that nature, seldom profuse, and seldom niggardly, has distributed her gifts more equally than she is generally supposed to have done. Education and situation make the great difference. Culture improves, and occasions elicit, natural talents. I make no doubt but that there are potentially, if I may use that pedantic word, many Bacons, Lockes, Newtons, Caesars, Cromwells, and Marlboroughs, at the plough-tail, behind counters, and, perhaps, even among the nobility ; but the soil must be cultivated, and the seasons favourable, for the fruit to have all its spirit and flavour.

If sometimes our common parent has been a little partial, and not kept the scales quite even ; if one preponderates too much, we throw into the lighter a due counterpoise of vanity, which never fails to set all right. Hence it happens, that hardly any one man

would, without reserve, and in every particular, change with any other.

Though all are thus satisfied with the dispensations of nature, how few listen to her voice ! how few follow her as a guide ! In vain she points out to us the plain and direct way to truth ; vanity, fancy, affectation, and fashion, assume her shape, and wind us through fairy-ground to folly and error.

These deviations from nature are often attended by serious consequences, and always by ridiculous ones ; for there is nothing truer than the trite observation, ‘ that people are never ridiculous for being what they really are, but for affecting what they really are not ’. Affectation is the only source, and, at the same time, the only justifiable object, of ridicule. No man whatsoever, be his pretensions what they will, has a natural right to be ridiculous ; it is an acquired right, and not to be acquired without some industry ; which perhaps is the reason why so many people are so jealous and tenacious of it. Even some people’s vices are not their own, but affected and adopted, though at the same time unenjoyed, in hopes of shining in those fashionable societies, where the reputation of certain vices gives lustre. In these cases, the execution is commonly as awkward as the design is absurd ; and the ridicule equals the guilt.

This calls to my mind a thing that really happened not many years ago. A young fellow of some rank and fortune, just let loose from the university, resolved, in order to make a figure in the world, to assume the shining character of what he called a rake. By way of learning the rudiments of his intended profession, he frequented the theatres, where he was often drunk, and always noisy. Being one night at the representa-

tion of that most absurd play, the *Libertine destroyed*, he was so charmed with the profligacy of the hero of the piece, that, to the edification of the audience, he swore many oaths that he would be the libertine *destroyed*. A discreet friend of his who sat by him, kindly represented to him, that to be the *libertine* was a laudable design, which he greatly approved of ; but that to be the libertine *destroyed*, seemed to him an unnecessary part of his plan, and rather rash. He persisted, however, in his first resolution, and insisted upon being the libertine, and *destroyed*. Probably he was so ; at least the presumption is in his favour. There are, I am persuaded, so many cases of this nature, that for my own part I would desire no greater step towards the reformation of manners for the next twenty years, than that our people should have no vices but *their own*.

The blockhead who affects wisdom, because nature has given him dullness, becomes ridiculous only by his adopted character ; whereas he might have stagnated unobserved in his native mud, or perhaps have engrossed deeds, collected shells, and studied heraldry, or logic, with some success.

The shining coxcomb aims at all, and decides finally upon everything, because nature has given him pertness. The degree of parts and animal spirits necessary to constitute that character, if properly applied, might have made him useful in many parts of life ; but his affectation and presumption make him useless in most, and ridiculous in all. . . .

Self-love, kept within due bounds, is a natural and useful sentiment. It is, in truth, social love too, as Mr. Pope has very justly observed : it is the spring of many good actions, and of no ridiculous ones. But

self-flattery is only the ape or caricatura of self-love, and resembles it no more than to heighten the ridicule. Like other flattery, it is the most profusely bestowed and greedily swallowed where it is the least deserved. I will conclude this subject with the substance of a fable of the ingenious Monsieur De La Motte, which seems not unapplicable to it.

Jupiter made a lottery in heaven, in which mortals, as well as gods, were allowed to have tickets. The prize was WISDOM ; and Minerva got it. The mortals murmured, and accused the gods of foul play. Jupiter, to wipe off this aspersion, declared another lottery, for mortals singly and exclusively of the gods. The prize was FOLLY. They got it, and shared it among themselves. All were satisfied. The loss of WISDOM was neither regretted nor remembered ; FOLLY supplied its place, and those who had the largest share of it thought themselves the wisest.—*Miscellanies.*

## THE WORLD : THE STAGE

(*Henry Fielding*)

THE world hath been often compared to the theatre ; and many grave writers, as well as the poets, have considered human life as a great drama, resembling, in almost every particular, those scenical representations which Thespis is first reported to have invented, and which have been since received with so much approbation and delight in all polite countries.

This thought hath been carried so far, and is become so general, that some words proper to the theatre, and which were, at first, metaphorically applied to the world, are now indiscriminately and literally spoken of both : thus stage and scene are by common use grown as familiar to us, when we speak of life in general, as when we confine ourselves to dramatic performances ; and when transactions behind the curtain are mentioned, St. James's is more likely to occur to our thoughts than Drury-Lane.

It may seem easy enough to account for all this, by reflecting that the theatrical stage is nothing more than a representation, or, as Aristotle calls it, an imitation of what really exists ; and hence, perhaps, we might fairly pay a very high compliment to those who by their writings or actions have been so capable of imitating life, as to have their pictures in a manner confounded with or mistaken for the originals.

But, in reality, we are not so fond of paying compli-

ments to these people, whom we use as children frequently do the instruments of their amusement ; and have much more pleasure in hissing and buffeting them, than in admiring their excellence. There are many other reasons which have induced us to see this analogy between the world and the stage.

Some have considered the larger part of mankind in the light of actors, as personating characters no more their own, and to which, in fact, they have no better title, than the player hath to be in earnest thought the king or emperor whom he represents. Thus the hypocrite may be said to be a player ; and indeed the Greeks called them both by one and the same name.

The brevity of life hath likewise given occasion to this comparison. So the immortal Shakespeare :

—Life's a poor player,  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more.

For which hackneyed quotation I will make the reader amends by a very noble one, which few, I believe, have read. It is taken from a poem called the DEITY, published about nine years ago, and long since buried in oblivion. A proof that good books no more than good men do always survive the bad.

From Thee<sup>1</sup> all human actions take their springs,  
The rise of empires and the fall of kings !  
See the vast THEATRE OF TIME display'd, —  
While o'er the scene succeeding heroes tread !  
With pomp the shining images succeed,  
What leaders triumph, and what monarchs bleed !

<sup>1</sup> The DEITY.

Perform the parts thy Providence assign'd,  
Their pride, their passions, to thy ends inclin'd :  
A while they glitter in the face of day,  
Then at thy nod the phantoms pass away ;  
No traces left of all the busy scene,  
But that remembrance says—THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN !

In all these, however, and in every other similitude of life to the theatre, the resemblance hath been always taken from the stage only. None, as I remember, have at all considered the audience at this great drama.

But as nature often exhibits some of her best performances to a very full house ; so will the behaviour of her spectators no less admit the above-mentioned comparison than that of her actors. In this vast theatre of time are seated the friend and the critic ; here are claps and shouts, hisses and groans ; in short, every thing which was ever seen or heard at the Theatre-royal.

Let us examine this in one example : for instance, in the behaviour of the great audience on that scene which nature was pleased to exhibit in the 12th chapter of the preceding book, where she introduced Black George running away with the 500l. from his friend and benefactor.

Those who sat in the world's upper gallery, treated that incident, I am well convinced, with their usual vociferation ; and every term of scurrilous reproach was most probably vented on that occasion.

If we had descended to the next order of spectators, we should have found an equal degree of abhorrence, though less of noise and scurrility ; yet here the good women gave Black George to the devil, and many of

them expected every minute that the cloven-footed gentleman would fetch his own.

The pit, as usual, was no doubt divided : those who delight in heroic virtue and perfect character, objected to the producing such instances of villainy, without punishing them very severely for the sake of example. Some of the author's friends cried—‘Look'e,<sup>1</sup> gentlemen, the man is a villain ; but it is nature for all that’. And all the young critics of the age, the clerks, apprentices, &c. called it low, and fell a groaning.

As for the boxes, they behaved with their accustomed politeness. Most of them were attending to something else. Some of those few who regarded the scene at all, declared he was a bad kind of man ; while others refused to give their opinion, till they had heard that of the best judges.

Now we, who are admitted behind the scenes of this great theatre of nature, (and no author ought to write any thing besides dictionaries and spelling-books who hath not this privilege) can censure the action, without conceiving any absolute detestation of the person, whom perhaps nature may not have designed to act an ill part in all her dramas : for in this instance, life most exactly resembles the stage, since it is often the same person who represents the villain and the hero ; and he who engages your admiration to-day, will probably attract your contempt to-morrow. As Garrick, whom I regard in tragedy to be the greatest genius the world hath ever produced, sometimes condescends to play the fool ; so did Scipio the Great, and Lælius the Wise, according to Horace, many years ago : nay, Cicero reports them to have been ‘incredibly childish’.—These, it is true, played the

<sup>1</sup> Look ye.

fool, like my friend Garrick, in jest only ; but several eminent characters have, in numberless instances of their lives, played the fool egregiously in earnest ; so far as to render it a matter of some doubt, whether their wisdom or folly was predominant ; or whether they were better entitled to the applause or censure, the admiration or contempt, the love or hatred, of mankind.

Those persons, indeed, who have passed any time behind the scenes of this great theatre, and are thoroughly acquainted not only with the several disguises which are there put on, but also with the fantastic and capricious behaviour of the Passions, who are the managers and directors of this theatre, (for as to Reason, the patentee, he is known to be a very idle fellow, and seldom to exert himself) may most probably have learned to understand the famous *nil admirari* of Horace, or in the English phrase, to stare at nothing.

A single bad act no more constitutes a villain in life, than a single bad part on the stage. The Passions, like the managers of a playhouse, often force men upon parts, without consulting their judgement, and sometimes without any regard to their talents. Thus the man, as well as the player, may condemn what he himself acts ; nay, it is common to see vice sit as awkwardly on some men, as the character of Iago would on the honest face of Mr. William Mills.

Upon the whole, then, the man of candour and of true understanding is never hasty to condemn. He can censure an imperfection, or even a vice, without rage against the guilty party. In a word, they are the same folly, the same childishness, the same ill-breeding, and the same ill-nature, which raise all

the clamours and uproars both in life and on the stage. The worst of men generally have the words rogue and villain most in their mouths, as the lowest of all wretches are the aptest to cry out *low* in the pit.—*Tom Jones.*

## STAGE-COACH COMPANIONS

(*Samuel Johnson*)

IN a stage-coach the passengers are for the most part wholly unknown to one another, and without expectation of ever meeting again when their journey is at an end ; one should, therefore, imagine, that it was of little importance to any of them, what conjectures the rest should form concerning him. Yet so it is, that as all think themselves secure from detection, all assume that character of which they are most desirous, and on no occasion is the general ambition of superiority more apparently indulged.

On the day of our departure, in the twilight of the morning, I ascended the vehicle with three men and two women, my fellow-travellers. It was easy to observe the affected elevation of mien with which every one entered, and the supercilious civility with which they paid their compliments to each other. When the first ceremony was dispatched, we sat silent for a long time, all employed in collecting importance into our faces, and endeavouring to strike reverence and submission into our companions.

It is always observable that silence propagates itself, and that the longer talk has been suspended the more difficult it is to find anything to say. We began now to wish for conversation ; but no one seemed inclined to descend from his dignity, or first propose a topic of discourse. At last a corpulent gentleman, who had

equipped himself for this expedition with a scarlet surtout and a large hat with a broad lace, drew out his watch, looked on it in silence, and then held it dangling at his finger. This was, I suppose, understood by all the company as an invitation to ask the time of the day, but nobody appeared to heed his overture ; and his desire to be talking so far overcame his resentment, that he let us know of his own accord that it was past five, and that in two hours we should be at breakfast.

His condescension was thrown away ; we continued all obdurate ; the ladies held up their heads ; I amused myself with watching their behaviour ; and of the other two, one seemed to employ himself in counting the trees as we drove by them, the other drew his hat over his eyes, and counterfeited a slumber. The man of benevolence, to show that he was not depressed by our neglect, hummed a tune and beat time upon his snuff-box.

Thus universally displeased with one another, and not much delighted with ourselves, we came at last to the little inn appointed for our repast ; and all began at once to recompense themselves for the constraint of silence, by innumerable questions and orders to the people that attended us. At last, what every one had called for was got, or declared impossible to be got at that time, and we were persuaded to sit round the same table ; when the gentleman in the red surtout looked again upon his watch, told us that we had half an hour to spare, but he was sorry to see so little merriment among us ; that all fellow-travellers were for the time upon the level, and that it was always his way to make himself one of the company. ‘I remember,’ says he, ‘it was on just such a morning

as this, that I and my Lord Mumble and the Duke of Tenterden were out upon a ramble : we called at a little house, as it might be this ; and my landlady, I warrant you, not suspecting to whom she was talking, was so jocular and facetious, and made so many merry answers to our questions, that we were all ready to burst with laughter. At last the good woman happening to overhear me whisper the Duke, and call him by his title, was so surprised and confounded, that we could scarcely get a word from her ; and the Duke never met me from that day to this, but he talks of the little house, and quarrels with me for terrifying the landlady.'

He had scarcely time to congratulate himself on the veneration which this narrative must have procured him from the company, when one of the ladies having reached out for a plate on a distant part of the table, began to remark ' the inconveniences of travelling, and the difficulty which they who never sat at home without a great number of attendants found in performing for themselves such offices as the road required ; but that people of quality often travelled in disguise, and might be generally known from the vulgar by their condescension to poor innkeepers, and the allowance which they made for any defect in their entertainment ; that for her part, while people were civil and meant well, it was never her custom to find fault, for one was not to expect upon a journey all that one enjoyed at one's own house '.

A general emulation seemed now to be excited. One of the men, who had hitherto said nothing, called for the last newspaper ; and having perused it awhile with deep pensiveness, ' It is impossible,' says he, ' for any man to guess how to act with regard to the stocks :

last week it was the general opinion that they would fall ; and I sold out twenty thousand pounds in order to a purchase : they have now risen unexpectedly ; and I make no doubt but at my return to London I shall risk thirty thousand pounds among them again '.

A young man, who had hitherto distinguished himself only by the vivacity of his looks, and a frequent diversion of his eyes from one object to another, upon this closed his snuff-box, and told us, that ' he had a hundred times talked with the chancellor and the judges on the subject of the stocks ; that for his part he did not pretend to be well acquainted with the principles on which they were established, but had always heard them reckoned pernicious to trade, uncertain in their produce, and unsolid in their foundation ; and that he had been advised by three judges, his most intimate friends, never to venture his money in the funds, but to put it out upon land-security, till he could light upon an estate in his own country '.

It might be expected, that upon these glimpses of latent dignity, we should all have begun to look round us with veneration ; and have behaved like the princes of romance, when the enchantment that disguises them is dissolved, and they discover the dignity of each other : yet it happened that none of these hints made much impression on the company ; every one was apparently suspected of endeavouring to impose false appearances upon the rest ; all continued their haughtiness in hopes to enforce their claims ; and all grew every hour more sullen, because they found their representations of themselves without effect.

Thus we travelled on four days with malevolence perpetually increasing, and without any endeavour but to outvie each other in superciliousness and neglect ;

and when any two of us could separate ourselves for a moment, we vented our indignation at the sauciness of the rest.

At length the journey was at an end ; and time and chance, that strip off all disguises, have discovered, that the intimate of lords and dukes is a nobleman's butler, who has furnished a shop with the money he has saved ; the man who deals so largely in the funds, is the clerk of a broker in 'Change-alley ; the lady who so carefully concealed her quality, keeps a cook-shop behind the Exchange ; and the young man, who is so happy in the friendship of the judges, engrosses and transcribes for bread in a garret of the Temple. Of one of the women only I could make no disadvantageous detection, because she had assumed no character, but accommodated herself to the scene before her without any struggle for distinction or superiority.

I could not forbear to reflect on the folly of practising a fraud, which, as the event showed, had been already practised too often to succeed, and by the success of which no advantage could have been obtained ; of assuming a character, which was to end with the day ; and of claiming upon false pretences honours which must perish with the breath that paid them.—*The Adventurer.*

## ANNIHILATION OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS

*(David Hume)*

WHILE these abominable scenes passed in England, the theatre of France was stained with a wickedness equally barbarous and still more public and deliberate. The order of knights templars had arisen during the first fervour of the Crusades ; and uniting the two qualities, the most popular in that age, devotion and valour, and exercising both in the most popular of all enterprises, the defence of the Holy Land, they had made rapid advances in credit and authority, and had acquired from the piety of the faithful, ample possessions in every country of Europe, especially in France. Their great riches, joined to the course of time, had by degrees relaxed the severity of these virtues ; and the templars had in a great measure lost that popularity which first raised them to honour and distinction. Acquainted from experience with the fatigues and dangers of those fruitless expeditions to the east, they rather chose to enjoy in ease their opulent revenues in Europe. And being all men of birth, educated, according to the custom of that age, without any tincture of letters, they scorned the ignoble occupations of a monastic life, and passed their time wholly in the fashionable amusements of hunting, gallantry, and the pleasures of the table. Their rival order, that of St. John of Jerusalem, whose poverty had as yet preserved

them from like corruptions, still distinguished themselves by their enterprises against the infidels, and succeeded to all the popularity, which was lost by the indolence and luxury of the templars. But though these reasons had weakened the foundations of this order, once so celebrated and revered, the immediate cause of their destruction proceeded from the cruel and vindictive spirit of Philip the Fair, who having entertained a private disgust against some eminent templars, determined to gratify at once his avidity and revenge, by involving the whole order in an undistinguished ruin. On no better information than that of two knights, condemned by their superiors to perpetual imprisonment for their vices and profligacy, he ordered on one day all the templars in France to be committed to prison, and imputed to them such enormous and absurd crimes, as are sufficient of themselves to destroy all the credit of the accusation. Besides their being universally charged with murder, robbery, and vices the most shocking to nature, every one it was pretended, whom they received into their order, was obliged to renounce his Saviour, to spit upon the cross, and to join to this impiety the superstition of worshipping a gilded head, which was secretly kept in one of their houses at Marseilles. They also initiated, it was said, ever candidate by such infamous rites, as could serve to no other purpose than to degrade the order in his eyes, and destroy for ever the authority of all his superiors over him. Above a hundred of these unhappy gentlemen were put to the question, in order to extort from them a confession of their guilt. The more obstinate perished in the hands of their tormentors : several, to procure immediate ease in the violence of their agonies, acknowledged whatever was required of

them : forged confessions were imputed to others : and Philip, as if their guilt were now certain, proceeded to a confiscation of all their treasures. But no sooner were the templars relieved from their tortures, than, preferring the most cruel execution to a life with infamy, they disavowed their confessions, exclaimed against the forgeries, justified the innocence of their order, and appealed to all the gallant actions performed by them in ancient or later times as a full apology for their conduct. The tyrant, enraged at this disappointment, and thinking himself now engaged in honour to proceed to extremities, ordered fifty-four of them whom he branded as relapsed heretics to perish by the punishment of fire in his capital. Great numbers expired after a like manner in other parts of the kingdom. And when he found that the perseverance of these unhappy victims in justifying to the last their innocence had made deep impression on the spectators, he endeavoured to overcome the constancy of the templars by new inhumanities. The grand master of the order, John de Molay, and another great officer, brother to the sovereign of Dauphiny, were conducted to a scaffold, erected before the church of Notre Dame, at Paris ; a full pardon was offered them on the one hand ; the fire, destined for their execution, was shown them on the other. These gallant nobles still persisted in the protestations of their own innocence and that of their order ; and were instantly hurried into the flames by the executioner.

In all this barbarous injustice Clement V, who was the creature of Philip, and then resided in France, fully concurred ; and without examining a witness, or making any inquiry into the truth of facts, he summarily, by the plenitude of his apostolic power,

abolished the whole order. The templars all over Europe were thrown into prison ; their conduct underwent a strict scrutiny ; the power of their enemies still pursued and oppressed them ; but nowhere, except in France, were the smallest traces of their guilt pretended to be found. England sent an ample testimony of their piety and morals ; but as the order was now annihilated, the knights were distributed into several convents, and their possessions were, by command of the Pope, transferred to the order of St. John.—*The History of England.*

## HISTORY

(*David Hume*)

IN reality, what more agreeable entertainment to the mind, than to be transported into the remotest ages of the world, and to observe human society, in its infancy, making the first faint essays towards the arts and sciences ; to see the policy of government, and the civility of conversation refining by degrees, and everything which is ornamental to human life, advancing towards its perfection ? To remark the rise, progress, declension, and final extinction of the most flourishing empires ; the virtues which contributed to their greatness, and the vices which drew on their ruin ? In short, to see all the human race, from the beginning of time, pass, as it were, in review before us, appearing in their true colours, without any of those disguises which, during their lifetime, so much perplexed the judgement of the beholders. What spectacle can be imagined so magnificent, so various, so interesting ? What amusement, either of the senses or imagination, can be compared with it ? Shall those trifling pastimes, which engross so much of our time, be preferred as more satisfactory, and more fit to engage our attention ? How perverse must that taste be which is capable of so wrong a choice of pleasures !

But history is a most improving part of knowledge, as well as an agreeable amusement ; and a great part of what we commonly call erudition, and value so

highly, is nothing but an acquaintance with historical facts. An extensive knowledge of this kind belongs to men of letters ; but I must think it an unpardonable ignorance in persons, of whatever sex or condition, not to be acquainted with the history of their own country, together with the histories of ancient Greece and Rome. A woman may behave herself with good manners, and have even some vivacity in her turn of wit ; but where her mind is so unfurnished, it is impossible her conversation can afford any entertainment to men of sense and reflection.

I must add, that history is not only a valuable part of knowledge, but opens the door to many other parts, and affords materials to most of the sciences. And, indeed, if we consider the shortness of human life, and our limited knowledge, even of what passes in our own time, we must be sensible that we should be for ever children in understanding, were it not for this invention, which extends our experience to all past ages, and to the most distant nations ; making them contribute as much to our improvement in wisdom, as if they had actually lain under our observation. A man acquainted with history may, in some respects, be said to have lived from the beginning of the world, and to have been making continual additions to his stock of knowledge in every century.

There is also an advantage in that experience, which is acquired by history, above what is learned by the practice of the world, that it brings us acquainted with human affairs, without diminishing in the least from the most delicate sentiments of virtue. And to tell the truth, I know not any study or occupation so unexceptionable as history in this particular. Poets can paint virtue in the most charming colours ; but

as they address themselves entirely to the passions, they often become advocates for vice. Even philosophers are apt to bewilder themselves in the subtlety of their speculations ; and we have seen some go so far as to deny the reality of all moral distinctions. But I think it a remark worthy the attention of the speculative, that the historians have been, almost without exception, the true friends of virtue, and have always represented it in its proper colours, however they may have erred in their judgements of particular persons. Machiavel himself discovers a true sentiment of virtue in his history of Florence. When he talks as a politician, in his general reasonings, he considers poisoning, assassination, and perjury, as lawful arts of power ; but when he speaks as an historian, in his particular narrations, he shows so keen an indignation against vice, and so warm an approbation of virtue in many passages, that I could not forbear applying to him that remark of Horace, that if you chase away Nature, though with ever so great indignity, she will always return upon you. Nor is this combination of historians, in favour of virtue, at all difficult to be accounted for. When a man of business enters into life and action, he is more apt to consider the characters of men, as they have relation to his interest, than as they stand in themselves ; and has his judgement warped on every occasion by the violence of his passion. When a philosopher contemplates characters and manners in his closet, the general abstract view of the objects leaves the mind so cold and unmoved, that the sentiments of nature have no room to play, and he scarce feels the difference between vice and virtue. History keeps in a just medium between these extremes, and places the objects in their true point of view. The writers of

history, as well as the readers, are sufficiently interested in the characters and events, to have a lively sentiment of blame or praise : and, at the same time, have no particular interest or concern to pervert their judgement.

## ADMIRAL BYNG

(*Horace Walpole*)

3 Mar. 1757

I HAVE deferred writing to you<sup>1</sup> till I could tell you something certain of the fate of Admiral Byng : no history was ever so extraordinary, or produced such a variety of surprising turns. In my last I told you that his sentence was referred to the twelve judges. They have made law of that of which no man else could make sense. The Admiralty immediately signed the warrant for his execution on the last of February—that is, three signed : Admiral Forbes positively refused, and would have resigned sooner. The Speaker would have had Byng expelled the House, but his tigers were pitiful. Sir Francis Dashwood tried to call for the court martial's letter, but the tigers were not so tender as that came to. Some of the court martial grew to feel as the execution advanced : the City grew impatient for it. Mr. Fox tried to represent the new ministry as compassionate, and has damaged their popularity. Three of the court martial applied on Wednesday last to Lord Temple to renew their solicitation for mercy. Sir Francis Dashwood moved a repeal of the bloody twelfth article : the House was savage enough ; yet Mr. Dodington softened them, and not one man spoke directly against mercy. They had nothing to fear : the man, who, of all defects, hates

<sup>1</sup> Horace Mann.

cowardice and avarice most, and who has some little objection to a mob in St. James's Street, has magnanimously forgot all the services of the great Lord Torrington. On Thursday seven of the court martial applied for mercy : they were rejected. On Friday a most strange event happened. I was told at the House that Captain Keppel and Admiral Norris desired a bill to absolve them from their oath of secrecy, that they might unfold something very material towards saving the prisoner's life. I was out of Parliament myself during my re-election, but I ran to Keppel ; he said he had never spoken in public, and could not, but would give authority to anybody else. The Speaker was putting the question for the orders of the day, after which no motion could be made : it was Friday, the House would not sit on Saturday, the execution was fixed for Monday. I felt all this in an instant, dragged Mr. Keppel to Sir Francis Dashwood, and he on the floor before he had taken his place, called out to the Speaker, and though the orders were passed, Sir Francis was suffered to speak. The House was wondrously softened : pains were taken to prove to Mr. Keppel that he might speak, notwithstanding his oath ; but he adhering to it, he had time given him till next morning to consider and consult some of his brethren who had commissioned him to desire the bill. The next day the King sent a message to our House, that he had respite Mr. Byng for a fortnight, till the bill could be passed, and he should know whether the Admiral was unjustly condemned. The bill was read twice in our House that day, and went through the committee ; Mr. Keppel affirming that he had something, in his opinion, of weight to tell, and which it was material his Majesty should know, and naming

four of his associates who desired to be empowered to speak. On Sunday all was confusion again, on news that the four disclaimed what Mr. Keppel had said for them. On Monday, he told the House that in one he had been mistaken ; that another did not declare off, but wished all were to be compelled to speak ; and from the two others he produced a letter upholding him in what he had said. The bill passed by 153 to 23. On Tuesday it was treated very differently by the Lords. The new Chief Justice and the late Chancellor pleaded against Byng like little attorneys, and did all they could to stifle truth. That all was a good deal. They prevailed to have the whole court martial at their bar. Lord Hardwicke urged for the intervention of a day, on the pretence of a trifling cause of an Irish bankruptcy then depending before the Lords, though Lord Temple showed them that some of the captains and admirals were under sailing orders for America. But Lord Hardwicke and Lord Anson were expeditious enough to do what they wanted in one night's time ; for the next day, yesterday, every one of the court martial defended their sentence, and even the three conscientious said not one syllable of their desire of the bill, which was accordingly unanimously rejected, and with great marks of contempt for the House of Commons.

This is as brief and as clear an abstract as I can give you of a most complicated affair, in which I have been a most unfortunate actor, having to my infinite grief, which I shall feel till the man is at peace, been instrumental in protracting his misery a fortnight, by what I meant as the kindest thing I could do. I never knew poor Byng enough to bow to ; but the great doubtfulness of his crime and the extraordinariness of

his sentence, the persecution of his enemies, who sacrifice him for their own guilt and the rage of a blinded nation, have called forth all my pity for him. His enemies triumph ; but who can envy the triumph of murder ?

## ANOTHER EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LETTER

(*Thomas Gray*)

Pembroke Hall. *August 26, 1766*

DEAR SIR,—It is long since that I heard you were gone in haste into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness ; and the same letter informed me that she was recovered ; otherwise I have then written to you, only to beg you would take care of her, and to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one never can have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling ! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction, I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but yesterday ; and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart. Many a corollary could I draw from this axiom for your use (not for my own), but I will leave you the merit of doing it yourself. Pray tell me how your own health is. I conclude it perfect, as I hear you offered yourself for a guide to Mr. Palgrave into the Sierra-Morena of Yorkshire. For me, I passed the end of May and all June in Kent not disagreeably the country is all a garden, gay, rich, and fruitful, and (from the rainy season) had preserved, till I left it, all that emerald verdure, which commonly one only sees

for the first fortnight of the spring. In the west part of it from every eminence the eye catches some long winding reach of the Thames or Medway, with all their navigation ; in the east, the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn. This last sentence is so fine, I am quite ashamed ; but no matter ; you must translate it into prose. Palgrave, if he heard it, would cover his face with his pudding sleeve. I went to Margate for a day ; one would think it was Bartholomew Fair that had *flown* down from Smithfield to Kent in the London machine, like my Lady Stuffdamask : (to be sure you have read the New Bath Guide, the most fashionable of books) so then I did *not* go to Kingsgate, because it belonged to my Lord Holland ; but to Ramsgate I did, and so to Sandwich, and Deal, and Dover, and Folkestone, and Hythe, all along the coast, very delightful. I do not tell you of the great and small beasts, and creeping things innumerable that I met with, because you do not suspect that this world is inhabited by anything but men and women and clergy, and such two-legged cattle. Now I am here again very disconsolate and all alone, even Mr. Brown is gone ; and the cares of this world are coming thick upon me ; I do not mean children. You, I hope, are better off, riding and walking with Mr. Aislaby, singing duets with my cousin Fanny, improving with Mr. Weddell, conversing with Mr. Harry Duncomb. I must not wish for you here ; besides, I am going to town at Michaelmas, by no means for amusement. Do you remember how we are to go into Wales next year ? well ! Adieu, I am sincerely yours.

T. G.

P.S. Pray how does poor Temple find himself in his new situation? Is Lord Lisburne as good as his letters were? What is come of the father and brother? Have you seen Mason?

## THE GREAT FROST : JANUARY, 1776.

(*Gilbert White*)

THERE were some circumstances attending the remarkable frost in January, 1776, so singular and striking that a short detail of them may not be unacceptable.

The most certain way to be exact will be to copy the passages from my journal, which were taken from time to time as things occurred. But it may be proper previously to remark that the first week in January was uncommonly wet, and drowned with vast rains from every quarter ; from whence may be inferred, as there is great reason to believe is the case, that intense frosts seldom take place till the earth is perfectly glutted and chilled with water,<sup>1</sup> and hence dry autumns are seldom followed by rigorous winters.

January 7th.—Snow driving all the day, which was followed by frost, sleet, and some snow, till the twelfth, when a prodigious mass overwhelmed all the works of men, drifting over the tops of the gates and filling the hollow lanes.

On the fourteenth the writer was obliged to be

<sup>1</sup> The autumn preceding January, 1768, was very wet, and particularly the month of September, during which there fell at Lyndon, in the county of Rutland, six inches and an half of rain. And the terrible long frost in 1739–40 set in after a rainy season, and when the springs were very high.

much abroad, and thinks he never before or since has encountered such rugged, Siberian weather. Many of the narrow roads were now filled above the tops of the hedges, through which the snow was driven into most romantic and grotesque shapes, so striking to the imagination as not to be seen without wonder and pleasure. The poultry dared not to stir out of their roosting-places, for cocks and hens are so dazzled and confounded by the glare of snow that they would soon perish without assistance. The hares also lay sullenly in their seats, and would not move till compelled by hunger ; being conscious, poor animals, that the drifts and heaps treacherously betray their footsteps, and prove fatal to numbers of them.

From the fourteenth the snow continued to increase, and began to stop the road-waggons and coaches, which could no longer keep on their regular stages ; and especially on the western roads, where the fall appears to have been greater than in the south. The company at Bath that wanted to attend the Queen's birthday were strangely incommoded ; many carriages of persons who got, in their way to town, from Bath as far as Marlborough, after strange embarrassments, here met with a *ne plus ultra*. The ladies fretted, and offered large rewards to labourers if they would shovel them a track to London ; but the relentless heaps of snow were too bulky to be removed ; and so the eighteenth passed over, leaving the company in very uncomfortable circumstances at the Castle and other inns.

On the twentieth the sun shone out for the first time since the frost began, a circumstance that has been remarked before much in favour of vegetation.

All this time the cold was not very intense, for the thermometer stood at 29, 28, 25, and thereabout ; but on the twenty-first it descended to 20. The birds now began to be in a very pitiable and starving condition. Tamed by the season, skylarks settled in the streets of towns, because they saw the ground was bare ; rooks frequented dunghills close to houses ; and crows watched horses as they passed, and greedily devoured what dropped from them ; hares now came into men's gardens, and scraping away the snow, devoured such plants as they could find.

On the twenty-second the author had occasion to go to London, through a sort of Laplandian scene, very wild and grotesque indeed. But the metropolis itself exhibited a still more singular appearance than the country ; for, being bedded deep in snow, the pavement of the streets could not be touched by the wheels or the horses' feet, so that the carriages ran about without the least noise. Such an exemption from din and clatter was strange but not pleasant ; it seemed to convey an uncomfortable idea of desolation :

. . . Ipsi silentia terrent.

On the twenty-seventh much snow fell all day, and in the evening the frost became very intense. At South Lambeth, for the four following nights, the thermometer fell to 11, 7, 6, 6 ; and at Selborne to 7, 6, 10 ; and on the 31st of January, just before sunrise, with rime on the trees and on the tube of the glass, the quicksilver sunk exactly to zero, being 32 degrees below the freezing-point ; but by eleven in the morning, though in the shade, it sprung up to

16 $\frac{1}{2}$ <sup>1</sup>—a most unusual degree of cold this for the south of England ! During these four nights the cold was so penetrating that it occasioned ice in warm chambers and under beds ; and in the day the wind was so keen that persons of robust constitutions could scarcely endure to face it. The Thames was at once so frozen over, both above and below bridge, that crowds ran about on the ice. The streets were now strangely encumbered with snow, which crumbled and trod dusty, and, turning grey, resembled bay-salt ; what had fallen on the roofs was so perfectly dry that from first to last it lay twenty-six days on the houses in the city, a longer time than had been remembered by the oldest housekeepers living. According to all appearances we might now have expected the continuance of this rigorous weather for weeks to come, since every night increased in severity ; but behold, without any apparent cause, on the first of February a thaw took place, and some rain followed before night, making good the observation above, that frosts often go off, as it were at once, without any gradual declension of cold. On the second of February the thaw persisted, and on the third swarms of little insects were frisking and sporting in a court-yard at South Lambeth as if they had felt no frost. Why the juices in the small bodies and smaller limbs of such minute beings are not frozen is a matter of curious inquiry.

<sup>1</sup> At Selborne the cold was greater than at any other place that the author could hear of with certainty, though some reported at the time that at a village in Kent the thermometer fell two degrees below zero, viz. thirty-four degrees below the freezing-point.

The thermometer used at Selborne was graduated by Benjamin Martin.

Severe frosts seem to be partial, or to run in currents ; for at the same juncture, as the author was informed by accurate correspondents, at Lyndon, in the county of Rutland, the thermometer stood at 19 ; at Blackburn, in Lancashire, at 19 ; and at Manchester at 21, 20, and 18. Thus does some unknown circumstance strangely overbalance latitude, and render the cold sometimes much greater in the southern than the northern parts of this kingdom.

The consequences of this severity were, that in Hampshire, at the melting of the snow, the wheat looked well, and the turnips came forth little injured. The laurels and laurustines were somewhat damaged, but only in hot aspects. No evergreens were quite destroyed ; and not half the damage sustained that befell in January, 1768. Those laurels that were a little scorched on the south sides were perfectly untouched on their north sides. The care taken to shake the snow day by day from the branches seemed greatly to avail the author's evergreens. A neighbour's laurel hedge in a high situation, and facing to the north, was perfectly green and vigorous ; and the Portugal laurels remained unhurt.

As to the birds, the thrushes and blackbirds were mostly destroyed ; and the partridges, by the weather and poachers, were so thinned that few remained to breed the following year.—*Natural History of Selborne.*

## AMERICA IS DISCOVERED

(*William Robertson*)

UPON the first of October [1492] they were, according to the admiral's reckoning, seven hundred and seventy leagues to the west of the Canaries ; but lest his men should be intimidated by the prodigious length of the navigation, he gave out that they had proceeded only five hundred and eighty-four leagues ; and, fortunately for Columbus, neither his own pilot, nor those of the other ships, had skill sufficient to correct this error, and discover the deceit. They had now been above three weeks at sea ; they had proceeded far beyond what former navigators had attempted or deemed possible ; all their prognostics of discovery, drawn from the flight of birds and other circumstances, had proved fallacious ; the appearances of land, with which their own credulity or the artifice of their commander had from time to time flattered and amused them, had been altogether illusive, and their prospect of success seemed now to be as distant as ever. These reflections occurred often to men who had no other object or occupation than to reason and discourse concerning the intention and circumstances of their expedition. They made impression, at first, upon the ignorant and timid, and extending, by degrees, to such as were better informed or more resolute, the contagion spread at length from ship to ship. From secret whispers or murmurings, they proceeded to open

cabals and public complaints. They taxed their sovereign with inconsiderate credulity, in paying such regard to the vain promises and rash conjectures of an indigent foreigner, as to hazard the lives of so many of her own subjects in prosecuting a chimerical scheme. They affirmed that they had fully performed their duty, by venturing so far in an unknown and hopeless course, and could incur no blame for refusing to follow, any longer, a desperate adventurer to certain destruction. They contended that it was necessary to think of returning to Spain, while their crazy vessels were still in a condition to keep the sea, but expressed their fears that the attempt would prove vain, as the wind, which had hitherto been so favourable to their course, must render it impossible to sail in the opposite direction. All agreed that Columbus should be compelled by force to adopt a measure on which their common safety depended. Some of the more audacious proposed, as the most expeditious and certain method for getting rid at once of his remonstrances, to throw him into the sea, being persuaded that, upon their return to Spain, the death of an unsuccessful projector would excite little concern, and be inquired into with no curiosity.

Columbus was fully sensible of his perilous situation. He had observed, with great uneasiness, the fatal operation of ignorance and of fear in producing disaffection among his crew, and saw that it was now ready to burst out into open mutiny. He retained, however, perfect presence of mind. He affected to seem ignorant of their machinations. Notwithstanding the agitation and solicitude of his own mind, he appeared with a cheerful countenance, like a man satisfied with the progress which he had made, and

confident of success. Sometimes he employed all the arts of insinuation, to soothe his men. Sometimes he endeavoured to work upon their ambition or avarice, by magnificent descriptions of the fame and wealth which they were about to acquire. On other occasions, he assumed a tone of authority, and threatened them with vengeance from their sovereign, if, by their dastardly behaviour, they should defeat this noble effort to promote the glory of God, and to exalt the Spanish name above that of every other nation. Even with seditious sailors, the words of a man whom they had been accustomed to reverence, were weighty and persuasive, and not only restrained them from those violent excesses which they meditated, but prevailed with them to accompany their admiral for some time longer.

As they proceeded, the indications of approaching land seemed to be more certain, and excited hope in proportion. The birds began to appear in flocks, making towards the south-west. Columbus, in imitation of the Portuguese navigators, who had been guided, in several of their discoveries, by the motion of birds, altered his course from due west towards that quarter whither they pointed their flight. But, after holding on for several days in this new direction, without any better success than formerly, having seen no object, during thirty days, but the sea and the sky, the hopes of his companions subsided faster than they had risen ; their fears revived with additional force ; impatience, rage, and despair, appeared in every countenance. All sense of subordination was lost : the officers, who had hitherto concurred with Columbus in opinion, and supported his authority, now took part with the private men : they assembled

tumultuously on the deck, expostulated with their commander, mingled threats with their expostulations, and required him instantly to tack about, and return to Europe. Columbus perceived that it would be of no avail to have recourse to any of his former arts, which having been tried so often had lost their effect ; and that it was impossible to rekindle any zeal for the success of the expedition among men, in whose breasts fear had extinguished every generous sentiment. He saw that it was no less vain to think of employing either gentle or severe measures to quell a mutiny so general and so violent. It was necessary, on all these accounts, to sooth passions which he could no longer command, and to give way to a torrent too impetuous to be checked. He promised solemnly to his men that he would comply with their request, provided they would accompany him and obey his commands for three days longer, and if, during that time, land were not discovered, he would then abandon the enterprise, and direct his course towards Spain.

Enraged as the sailors were, and impatient to turn their faces again towards their native country, this proposition did not appear to them unreasonable. Nor did Columbus hazard much in confining himself to a term so short. The presages of discovering land were now so numerous and promising, that he deemed them infallible. For some days the sounding-line reached the bottom, and the soil which it brought up indicated land to be at no great distance. The flocks of birds increased, and were composed not only of sea-fowl, but of such land birds as could not be supposed to fly far from the shore. The crew of the *Pinta* observed a cane floating, which seemed to have been newly cut, and likewise a piece of timber artificially

carved. The sailors aboard the *Nigna* took up the branch of a tree with red berries, perfectly fresh. The clouds around the setting sun assumed a new appearance ; the air was more mild and warm, and, during night, the wind became unequal and variable. From all these symptoms, Columbus was so confident of being near land, that on the evening of the eleventh of October, after public prayers for success, he ordered the sails to be furled, and the ships to lie by, keeping strict watch lest they should be driven ashore in the night. During this interval of suspense and expectation, no man shut his eyes ; all kept upon deck, gazing intently towards that quarter where they expected to discover the land which had been so long the object of their wishes.

About two hours before midnight, Columbus standing on the forecastle, observed a light at a distance, and privately pointed it out to Pedro Gutierrez, a page of the Queen's wardrobe. Gutierrez perceived it, and calling to Salcedo, comptroller of the fleet, all three saw it in motion, as if it were carried from place to place. A little after midnight, the joyful sound of *land ! land !* was heard from the *Pinta*, which kept always ahead of the other ships. But, having been so often deceived by fallacious appearances, every man was now become slow of belief, and waited in all the anguish of uncertainty and impatience for the return of day. As soon as morning dawned, all doubts and fears were dispelled.

## BARTER AND MONEY

*(Adam Smith)*

IN the rude ages of society, cattle are said to have been the common instrument of commerce ; and, though they must have been a most inconvenient one, yet in old times we find things were frequently valued according to the number of cattle which had been given in exchange for them. The armour of Diomede, says Homer, cost only nine oxen ; but that of Glaucus cost an hundred oxen. Salt is said to be the common instrument of commerce and exchanges in Abyssinia ; a species of shells in some parts of the coast of India ; dried cod at Newfoundland ; tobacco in Virginia ; sugar in some of our West India colonies ; hides or dressed leather in some other countries ; and there is at this day a village in Scotland where it is not uncommon, I am told, for a workman to carry nails instead of money to the baker's shop or the alehouse.

In all countries, however, men seem at last to have been determined by irresistible reasons to give the preference, for this employment, to metals above every other commodity. Metals can not only be kept with as little loss as any other commodity, scarce anything being less perishable than they are ; but they can likewise, without any loss, be divided into any number of parts, as by fusion those parts can easily be re-united again ; a quality which no other equally durable commodities possess, and which more than any other

quality renders them fit to be the instruments of commerce and circulation. The man who wanted to buy salt, for example, and had nothing but cattle to give in exchange for it, must have been obliged to buy salt to the value of a whole ox, or a whole sheep, at a time. He could seldom buy less than this, because what he was to give for it could seldom be divided without loss ; and if he had a mind to buy more, he must, for the same reasons, have been obliged to buy double or triple the quantity, the value, to wit, of two or three oxen, or of two or three sheep. If, on the contrary, instead of sheep or oxen, he had metals to give in exchange for it, he could easily proportion the quantity of the metal to the precise quantity of the commodity which he had immediate occasion for.

Different metals have been made use of by different nations for this purpose. Iron was the common instrument of commerce among the ancient Spartans ; copper among the ancient Romans ; and gold and silver among all rich and commercial nations.

Those metals seem originally to have been made use of for this purpose in rude bars, without any stamp or coinage. Thus we are told by Pliny, upon the authority of Timaeus, an ancient historian, that, till the time of Servius Tullius, the Romans had no coined money, but made use of unstamped bars of copper, to purchase whatever they had occasion for. These rude bars, therefore, performed at this time the function of money.

The use of metals in this rude state was attended with two very considerable inconveniences ; first, with the trouble of weighing ; and, secondly, with that of assaying them. In the precious metals, where

a small difference in the quantity makes a great difference in the value, even the business of weighing, with proper exactness, requires at least very accurate weights and scales. The weighing of gold in particular is an operation of some nicety. In the coarser metals, indeed, where a small error would be of little consequence, less accuracy would, no doubt, be necessary. Yet we should find it excessively troublesome, if every time a poor man had occasion either to buy or sell a farthing's worth of goods, he was obliged to weigh the farthing. The operation of assaying is still more difficult, still more tedious ; and, unless a part of the metal is fairly melted in the crucible, with proper dissolvents, any conclusion that can be drawn from it, is extremely uncertain. Before the institution of coined money, however, unless they went through this tedious and difficult operation, people must always have been liable to the grossest frauds and impositions ; and instead of a pound weight of pure silver, or pure copper, might receive in exchange for their goods, an adulterated composition of the coarsest and cheapest materials, which had, however, in their outward appearance, been made to resemble those metals. To prevent such abuses, to facilitate exchanges, and thereby to encourage all sorts of industry and commerce, it has been found necessary, in all countries that have made any considerable advances towards improvement, to affix a public stamp upon certain quantities of such particular metals, as were in those countries commonly made use of to purchase goods. Hence the origin of coined money, and of those public offices called mints ; institutions exactly of the same nature with those of the aulnagers<sup>1</sup> and stampmasters

<sup>1</sup> Gaugers.

of woollen and linen cloth. All of them are equally meant to ascertain, by means of a public stamp, the quantity and uniform goodness of those different commodities when brought to market.

## A PLEA : ENGLAND AND AMERICA SHOULD BE RECONCILED : 1775

*(Ednund Burke)*

My hold of the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties, which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government ; —they will cling and grapple to you ; and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood that your government may be one thing, and their privileges another ; that these two things may exist without any mutual relation ; the cement is gone ; the cohesion is loosened ; and everything hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have ; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But, until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity,

freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly. This is the true act of navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world. Deny them this participation of freedom, and you break that sole bond, which originally made, and must still preserve, the unity of the empire. Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your dockets and your clearances, are what form the great securities of your commerce. Do not dream that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion that gives all their life and efficacy to them. It is the spirit of the English constitution, which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member.

Is it not the same virtue which does everything for us here in England ? Do you imagine, then, that it is the land tax act which raises your revenue ? that it is the annual vote in the committee of supply which gives you your army ? or that it is the mutiny bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline ? No ! surely no ! It is the love of the people ; it is their attachment to their government, from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution, which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience, without which your

army would be a base rabble, and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians, who have no place among us ; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material ; and who therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth everything, and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom ; and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our places as becomes our station and ourselves, we ought to auspicate all our public proceedings on America, with the old warning of the Church, *Sursum corda !* We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire ; and have made the most extensive, and the only honourable conquests, not by destroying, but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness, of the human race. Let us get an American revenue as we have got an American empire. English privileges have made it all that it is ; English privileges alone will make it all it can be.

In full confidence of this unalterable truth, I now (*quod felix faustumque sit*) lay the first stone of the Temple of Peace ; and I move you,

‘That the Colonies and Plantations of Great Britain in North America, consisting of fourteen separate governments, and containing two millions and upwards of free inhabitants, have not had the liberty and privilege of electing and sending any Knights and Burgesses or others, to represent them in the High Court of Parliament.’—*Speech on moving resolution for Conciliation with the Colonies, 1775.* ✓

## HUMOURS OF THE ENGLISH NATION

(*Edmund Burke*)

8 Oct. 1777<sup>1</sup>

. . . As to that popular humour, which is the medium we float in, if I can discern anything at all of its present state, it is far worse than I have ever known or could ever imagine it. The faults of the people are not popular vices, at least they are not such as grow out of what we used to take to be the English temper and character. The greatest number have a sort of a heavy, lumpish acquiescence in Government, without much respect or esteem for those that compose it. I really cannot avoid making some very unpleasant prognostics from this disposition of the people. I think many of the symptoms must have struck you ; I will mention one or two that are to me very remarkable. You must know that at Bristol we grow, as an election interest, and even as a party interest, rather stronger than we were when I was chosen. We have just now a majority in the corporation. In this state of matters, what, think you, have they done ? They have voted their freedom to Lord Sandwich and Lord Suffolk ; and the first at the very moment when the American privateers were domineering in the Irish Sea, and taking the Bristol traders in the Bristol Channel ; to the latter, when his remonstrances on the subject of captures were the jest of Paris and

<sup>1</sup> To Charles James Fox.

of Europe. This fine step was taken, it seems, in honour of the zeal of these two profound statesmen in the prosecution of John the Painter, so totally negligent are they of everything essential, and so long and so deeply affected with trash the most low and contemptible ; just as if they thought the merit of Sir John Fielding was the most shining point in the character of great ministers, in the most critical of all times, and, of all others, the most deeply interesting to the commercial world. My best friends in the corporation had no other doubts on the occasion, than whether it did not belong to me, by right of my representative capacity, to be the bearer of this auspicious compliment. In addition to this, if it could receive any addition, they now employ me to solicit, as a favour of no small magnitude, that, after the example of Newcastle, they may be suffered to arm vessels for their own defence in the Channel. Their memorial, under the seal of Merchants' Hall, is now lying on the table before me.

Not a soul has the least sensibility on finding themselves, now for the first time, obliged to act as if the community was dissolved, and, after enormous payments towards the common protection, each part was to defend itself, as if it were a separate state. I don't mention Bristol as if that were the part furthest gone in this mortification. Far from it ; I know that there is rather a little more life in us than in any other place. In Liverpool they are literally almost ruined by this American War ; but they love it as they suffer from it. In short, from whatever I see, and from whatever quarter I hear, I am convinced that everything that is not absolute stagnation is evidently a party spirit, very adverse to our politics, and to the

principles from whence they arise. There are manifest marks of the resurrection of the Tory party. They no longer criticize, as all disengaged people in the world always will, on the acts of Government ; but they are silent under every evil, and hide and cover up every ministerial blunder and misfortune, with the officious zeal of men who think they have a party of their own to support in power. The Tories do universally think their power and consequence involved in the success of this American business. The clergy are astonishingly warm in it, and what the Tories are when embodied and united with their natural head the Crown, and animated by their clergy, no man knows better than yourself. As to the Whigs, I think them far from extinct. They are, what they always were (except by the able use of opportunities), by far the weakest party in this country. They have not yet learned the application of their principles to the present state of things ; and as to the Dissenters, the main effective part of the Whig strength, they are, to use a favourite expression of our American campaign style, ‘not all in force’. They will do very little. . . . In this temper of the people I do not wholly wonder that our Northern friends look a little towards events ; in war, particularly, I am afraid it must be so. There is something so weighty and decisive in the events of war, something that so completely overpowers the imagination of the vulgar, that all counsels must, in a great degree, be subordinate to, and attendant on them. . . . We shall be lucky enough if, keeping ourselves attentive and alert, we can contrive to profit of the occasions as they arise ; though I am sensible that those who are best provided with a general scheme, are fittest to take advantage of all contingencies.

## CONSTANTINOPLE CAPTURED

(*Edward Gibbon*)

IN the confusion of darkness an assailant may sometimes succeed ; but, in this great and general attack, the military judgement and astrological knowledge of Mahomet advised him to expect the morning, the memorable twenty-ninth of May, in the fourteen hundred and fifty-third year of the Christian era. The preceding night had been strenuously employed : the troops, the cannon, and the fascines were advanced to the edge of the ditch, which, in many parts, presented a smooth and level passage to the breach ; and his four-score galleys almost touched, with the prows and their scaling-ladders, the less defensible walls of the harbour. Under pain of death, silence was enjoined ; but the physical laws of motion and sound are not obedient to discipline or fear ; each individual might suppress his voice and measure his footsteps ; but the march and labour of thousands must inevitably produce a strange confusion of dissonant clamours, which reached the ears of the watchmen of the towers. At daybreak, without the customary signal of the morning-gong, the Turks assaulted the city by sea and land ; and the similitude of a twined or twisted thread has been applied to the closeness and continuity of their line of attack. The foremost ranks consisted of the refuse of the host, a voluntary crowd, who fought without order or command ; of the feebleness of age

or childhood, of peasants and vagrants, and of all who had joined the camp in the blind hope of plunder and martyrdom. The common impulse drove them onwards to the wall ; the most audacious to climb were instantly precipitated ; and not a dart, not a bullet of the Christians was idly wasted on the accumulated throng. But their strength and ammunition were exhausted in this laborious defence ; the ditch was filled with the bodies of the slain ; they supported the footsteps of their companions ; and of this devoted vanguard the death was more serviceable than the life. Under their respective bashaws and sanjaks, the troops of Anatolia and Romania were successively led to the charge : their progress was various and doubtful ; but, after a conflict of two hours, the Greeks still maintained and improved their advantage ; and the voice of the emperor was heard, encouraging his soldiers to achieve, by a last effort, the deliverance of their country. In that fatal moment, the Janizaries arose, fresh, vigorous, and invincible. The sultan himself on horseback, with an iron mace in his hand, was the spectator and judge of their valour ; he was surrounded by ten thousand of his domestic troops, whom he reserved for the decisive occasion ; and the tide of battle was directed and impelled by his voice and eye. His numerous ministers of justice were posted behind the line, to urge, to restrain, and to punish ; and, if danger was in the front, shame and inevitable death were in the rear of the fugitives. The cries of fear and of pain were drowned in the martial music of drums, trumpets, and attaballs ; and experience has proved that the mechanical operation of sounds, by quickening the circulation of the blood and spirits, will act on the human machine more

forcibly than the eloquence of reason and honour. From the lines, the galleys, and the bridge, the Ottoman artillery thundered on all sides ; and the camp and city, the Greeks and the Turks were involved in a cloud of smoke, which could only be dispelled by the final deliverance or destruction of the Roman Empire. The single combats of the heroes of history or fable amuse our fancy and engage our affections : the skilful evolutions of war may inform the mind, and improve a necessary though pernicious science. But, in the uniform and odious pictures of a general assault, all is blood, and horror, and confusion ; nor shall I strive, at the distance of three centuries and a thousand miles, to delineate a scene of which there could be no spectators, and of which the actors themselves were incapable of forming any just or adequate idea.

The immediate loss of Constantinople may be ascribed to the bullet, or arrow, which pierced the gauntlet of John Justiniani. The sight of his blood, and the exquisite pain, appalled the courage of the chief, whose arms and counsel were the firmest rampart of the city. As he withdrew from his station in quest of a surgeon, his flight was perceived and stopped by the indefatigable emperor. ‘ Your wound,’ exclaimed Palaeologus, ‘ is slight ; the danger is pressing ; your presence is necessary ; and whither will you retire ? ’ ‘ I will retire,’ said the trembling Genoese, ‘ by the same road which God has opened to the Turks ’ ; and at these words he hastily passed through one of the breaches of the inner wall. By this pusillanimous act, he stained the honours of a military life ; and the few days which he survived in Galata, or the isle of Chios, were embittered by his own and the public reproach. His example was imitated by the greatest

part of the Latin auxiliaries, and the defence began to slacken when the attack was pressed with redoubled vigour. The number of the Ottomans was fifty, perhaps a hundred, times superior to that of the Christians ; the double walls were reduced by the cannon to an heap of ruins ; in a circuit of several miles, some places must be found more easy of access or more feebly guarded ; and, if the besiegers could penetrate in a single point, the whole city was irrecoverably lost. The first who deserved the sultan's reward was Hassan, the Janizary, of gigantic stature and strength. With his scimitar in one hand and his buckler in the other, he ascended the outward fortification : of the thirty Janizaries, who were emulous of his valour, eighteen perished in the bold adventure. Hassan and his twelve companions had reached the summit : the giant was precipitated from the rampart ; he rose on one knee, and was again oppressed by a shower of darts and stones. But his success had proved that the achievement was possible : the walls and towers were instantly covered with a swarm of Turks ; and the Greeks, now driven from the vantage-ground, were overwhelmed by increasing multitudes. Amidst these multitudes, the emperor, who accomplished all the duties of a general and a soldier, was long seen, and finally lost. The nobles who fought round his person sustained, till their last breath, the honourable names of Palaeologus and Cantacuzene : his mournful exclamation was heard, ‘ Cannot there be found a Christian to cut off my head ? ’ and his last fear was that of falling alive into the hands of the infidels. The prudent despair of Constantine cast away the purple ; amidst the tumult, he fell by an unknown hand, and his body was buried under a

mountain of the slain. After his death, resistance and order were no more ; the Greeks fled towards the city ; and many were pressed and stifled in the narrow pass of the gate of St. Romanus. The victorious Turks rushed through the breaches of the inner wall ; and, as they advanced into the streets, they were soon joined by their brethren, who had forced the gate Phenar on the side of the harbour. In the first heat of the pursuit, about two thousand Christians were put to the sword ; but avarice soon prevailed over cruelty ; and the victors acknowledged that they should immediately have given quarter, if the valour of the emperor and his chosen bands had not prepared them for a similar opposition in every part of the capital. It was thus, after a siege of fifty-three days, that Constantinople, which had defied the power of Chosroes, the Chagan, and the caliphs, was irretrievably subdued by the arms of Mahomet the Second. Her empire only had been subverted by the Latins : her religion was trampled in the dust by the Moslem conquerors.—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

## PROPERTY

(*William Paley*)

THERE must be some very important advantages to account for an institution, which in one view of it is so paradoxical and unnatural.

The principal of these advantages are the following :

(i) It increases the produce of the earth.

The earth, in climates like ours, produces little without cultivation ; and none would be found willing to cultivate the ground, if others were to be admitted to an equal share of the produce. The same is true of the care of flocks and herds of tame animals.

Crabs and acorns, red deer, rabbits, game, and fish, are all we should have to subsist upon in this country, if we trusted to the spontaneous productions of the soil : and it fares not much better with other countries. A nation of North American savages, consisting of two or three hundred, will take up and be half-starved upon a tract of land, which in Europe, and with European management, would be sufficient for the maintenance of as many thousands.

In some fertile soils, together with great abundance of fish upon their coasts, and in regions where clothes are unnecessary, a considerable degree of population may subsist without property in land, which is the case in the islands of Otahiete : but in less favoured situations, as in the country of New Zealand, though this sort of property obtain in a small degree, the

inhabitants, for want of a more secure and regular establishment of it, are driven oft-times by the scarcity of provision to devour one another.

(2) It preserves the produce of the earth to maturity.

We may judge what would be the effects of a community of right to the productions of the earth, from the trifling specimens which we see of it at present. A cherry-tree in a hedgerow, nuts in a wood, the grass of an unstinted pasture, are seldom of much advantage to anybody, because people do not wait for the proper season of reaping them. Corn, if any were sown, would never ripen ; lambs and calves would never grow up to sheep and cows, because the first person that met with them would reflect that he had better take them as they are, than leave them for another.

(3) It prevents contests.

War and waste, tumult and confusion, must be unavoidable and eternal, where there is not enough for all, and where there are no rules to adjust the division.

(4) It improves the conveniency of living.

This it does two ways. It enables mankind to divide themselves into distinct professions ; which is impossible unless a man can exchange the productions of his own art for what he wants from others ; and exchange implies property. Much of the advantage of civilized over savage life depends upon this. When a man is from necessity his own tailor, tent-maker, carpenter, cook, huntsman, and fisherman, it is not probable that he will be expert at any of his callings. Hence the rude habitations, furniture, clothing, and implements of savages ; and the tedious length of time which all their operations require.

It likewise encourages those arts, by which the

accommodations of human life are supplied, by appropriating to the artist the benefit of his discoveries and improvements ; without which appropriation, ingenuity will never be exerted with effect.

Upon these several accounts we may venture, with a few exceptions, to pronounce that even the poorest and the worst provided in countries where property and the consequences of property prevail, are in a better situation, with respect to food, raiment, houses, and what are called the necessities of life, than *any* are, in places where most things remain in common.

The balance therefore, upon the whole, must preponderate in favour of property with manifest and great excess.

Inequality of property in the degree in which it exists in most countries of Europe, abstractedly considered, is an evil : but it is an evil which flows from those rules concerning the acquisition and disposal of property, by which men are incited to industry, and by which the object of their industry is rendered secure and valuable. If there be any great inequality unconnected with this origin, it ought to be corrected.

—*Moral and Political Philosophy.*

## A DENOUNCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

(*Edmund Burke*)

[1796]<sup>1</sup>

MERE locality does not constitute a body politic. Had Cade and his gang got possession of London, they would not have been the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council. The body politic of France existed in the majesty of its throne ; in the dignity of its nobility ; in the honour of its gentry ; in the sanctity of its clergy ; in the reverence of its magistracy ; in the weight and consideration due to its landed property in the several bailliages ; in the respect due to its movable substance represented by the corporations of the kingdom.

All these particular *moleculae* united, form the great mass of what is truly the body politic in all countries. They are so many deposits and receptacles of justice ; because they can only exist by justice. Nation is a moral essence, not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclator. France, though out of her territorial possession, exists ; because the sole possible claimant, I mean the proprietary, and the government to which the proprietary adheres, exists and claims. God forbid, that if you were expelled from your house by ruffians and assassins, that I should

<sup>1</sup> An open letter to the public. (This long passage can be satisfactorily condensed into about 350 words.)

call the material walls, doors, and windows of —, the ancient and honourable family of —.' Am I to transfer to the intruders, who, not content to turn you out naked to the world, would rob you of your very name, all the esteem and respect I owe to you ? The regicides in France are not France. France is out of her bounds, but the kingdom is the same.

To illustrate my opinions on this subject, let us suppose a case, which, after what has happened, we cannot think absolutely impossible, though the augury is to be abominated, and the event deprecated with our most ardent prayers. Let us suppose then, that our gracious Sovereign was sacrilegiously murdered ; his exemplary queen, at the head of the matronage of this land, murdered in the same manner ; that those princesses whose beauty and modest elegance are the ornaments of the country, and who are the leaders and patterns of the ingenuous youth of their sex, were put to a cruel and ignominious death, with hundreds of others, mothers and daughters, ladies of the first distinction ; that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, princes the hope and pride of the nation, with all their brethren, were forced to fly from the knives of assassins ; that the whole body of our excellent clergy were either massacred or robbed of all, and transported ; the Christian religion, in all its denominations, forbidden and persecuted ; the law totally, fundamentally, and in all its parts, destroyed ; the judges put to death by revolutionary tribunals ; the Peers and Commons robbed to the last acre of their estates—massacred, if they stayed, or obliged to seek life in flight, in exile, and in beggary ; that the whole landed property should share the very same fate ; that every military and naval officer of honour

and rank, almost to a man, should be placed in the same description of confiscation and exile ; that the principal merchants and bankers should be drawn out, as from an hen-coop, for slaughter ; that the citizens of our greatest and most flourishing cities, when the hand and the machinery of the hangman were not found sufficient, should have been collected in the public squares, and massacred by thousands with cannon ; if three hundred thousand others should have been doomed to a situation worse than death in noisome and pestilential prisons ;—in such a case, is it in the faction of robbers I am to look for my country ? Would this be the England that you and I, and even strangers, admired, honoured, loved, and cherished ? Would not the exiles of England alone be my government and my fellow citizens ? Would not their places of refuge be my temporary country ? Would not all my duties and all my affections be there, and there only ? Should I consider myself as a traitor to my country, and deserving of death, if I knocked at the door and heart of every potentate in Christendom to succour my friends, and to avenge them on their enemies ? Could I, in any way, show myself more a patriot ? What should I think of those potentates who insulted their suffering brethren ; who treated them as vagrants, or at least as mendicants ; and could find no allies, no friends, but in regicide murderers and robbers ? What ought I to think and feel, if being geographers instead of kings, they recognized the desolated cities, the wasted fields, and the rivers polluted with blood, of this geometrical measurement, as the honourable member of Europe, called England ? In that condition what should we think of Sweden, Denmark, or Holland, or

whatever Power afforded us a churlish and treacherous hospitality, if they should invite us to join the standard of our king, our laws, and our religion, if they should give us a direct promise of protection—if after all this, taking advantage of our deplorable situation, which left us no choice, they were to treat us as the lowest and vilest of all mercenaries? If they were to send us far from the aid of our king, and our suffering country, to squander us away in the most pestilential climates for a venal enlargement of their own territories, for the purpose of trucking them, when obtained, with those very robbers and murderers they had called upon us to oppose with our blood? What would be our sentiments, if in that miserable service we were not to be considered either as English, or as Swedes, Dutch, Danes, but as outcasts of the human race? Whilst we were fighting those battles of their interests, and as their soldiers, how should we feel if we were to be excluded from all their cartels? How must we feel, if the pride and flower of the English nobility and gentry, who might escape the pestilential clime, and the devouring sword, should, if taken prisoners, be delivered over as rebel subjects, to be condemned as rebels, as traitors, as the vilest of all criminals, by tribunals formed of Maroon negro slaves, covered over with the blood of their masters, who were made free and organized into judges, for their robberies and murders? What should we feel under this inhuman, insulting, and barbarous protection of Muscovites, Swedes, or Hollanders? Should we not obtest Heaven, and whatever justice there is yet on earth? Oppression makes wise men mad; but the distemper is still the madness of the wise, which is better than the sobriety of fools. Their cry is the voice of sacred

misery, exalted, not into wild raving, but into the sanctified frenzy of prophecy and inspiration—in that bitterness of soul, in that indignation of suffering virtue, in that exaltation of despair, would not persecuted English loyalty cry out, with an awful warning voice, and denounce the destruction that waits on monarchs, who consider fidelity to them as the most degrading of all vices ; who suffer it to be punished as the most abominable of all crimes ; and who have no respect but for rebels, traitors, regicides, and furious negro slaves, whose crimes have broke their chains ? Would not this warm language of high indignation have more of sound reason in it, more of real affection, more of true attachment, than all the lullabies of flatterers, who would hush monarchs to sleep in the arms of death ? Let them be well convinced, that if ever this example should prevail in its whole extent, it will have its full operation. Whilst kings stand firm on their base, though under that base there is a sure-wrought mine, there will not be wanting to their levées a single person of those who are attached to their fortune, and not to their persons or cause : but hereafter none will support a tottering throne. Some will fly for fear of being crushed under the ruin ; some will join in making it. They will seek in the destruction of royalty, fame, and power, and wealth, and the homage of kings, with Reubel, with Carnot, with Revellière, and with the Merlins and the Talliens, rather than suffer exile and beggary with the Condés, or the Broglies, the Castries, the D'Avrais, the Serrents, the Cazalés, and the long line of loyal, suffering patriot nobility, or to be butchered with the oracles and the victims of the laws, the D'Ormesons, the D'Espremenils, and the Malesherbes. This example

we shall give, if instead of adhering to our fellows in a cause which is an honour to us all, we abandon the lawful government and lawful corporate body of France, to hunt for a shameful and ruinous fraternity, with this odious usurpation that disgraces civilized society and the human race.

And is then example nothing? It is everything. Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other. This war is a war against that example. It is not a war for Louis the Eighteenth, or even for the property, virtue, fidelity of France. It is a war for George the Third, for Francis the Second, and for all the dignity, property, honour, virtue, and religion of England, of Germany, and of all nations. . . .

## A BRUSH WITH THE SPANIARDS

(*Lord Collingwood*)

*Excellent, off Lagos, 17 Feb. 1797*

I AM sure you<sup>1</sup> will be glad to hear from me after such a day as we have had on the 14th (Valentine's day). It was indeed a glorious one, and it seldom falls to the lot of any man to share in such a triumph. First, my love, I am as well as I ever was in my life, and have now pretty well got the better of my fatigue. Now for history. We were cruising at sea, off Cape St. Vincent, with fifteen sail of the line, when the Admiral first received information that the Spanish fleet, twenty-eight sail of the line, were come down the Mediterranean ; and a day or two afterwards that twenty-seven sail were in our neighbourhood, one being left at Gibraltar with ten or twelve frigates, making in all thirty-eight or forty sail. We were fifteen, and four frigates. He determined to attack them. On the night of the 13th, the weather being fine, but thick and hazy, we heard their signal-guns, which announced their vicinity, and soon after daylight we saw them very much scattered, while we were a compact little body. We flew to them as a hawk to his prey, passed through them in the disordered state in which they were, separated them into two distinct parts, and then tacked upon their largest division.

<sup>1</sup> His wife. This letter is taken from *Letters Written in War Time*, edited by H. Wragg, 1915.

The *Culloden* and *Captain*, Commodore Nelson's ship, were the first that brought them to close action. I by chance became the Admiral's leader (for the circumstances were such as would admit of no regular order), and had the good fortune to get very early into action. The first ship we engaged was the *San Salvador del Mondo*, of 112 guns, a first-rate ; we were not farther from her when we began than the length of our garden. Her colours soon came down, and her fire ceased. I hailed, and asked if they surrendered ; and when, by signs made by a man who stood by the colours, I understood that they had, I left her to be taken possession of by somebody behind, and made sail for the next, but was very much surprised on looking back to find her colours up again, and her battle recommenced. We very soon came up with the next, the *San Isidro*, 74, so close alongside, that a man might jump from one ship to the other. Our fire carried all before it ; and in ten minutes she hauled down her colours ; but I had been deceived once, and obliged this fellow to hoist English colours before I left him, and made a signal for somebody behind to board him, when the Admiral ordered the *Lively* frigate to take charge of him. Then making all sail, passing between our line and the enemy, we came up with the *San Nicholas*, of 80 guns, which happened at the time to be abreast of the *San Josef*, of 112 guns ; we did not touch sides, but you could not put a bodkin between us, so that our shot passed through both ships, and, in attempting to extricate themselves, they got on board each other. My good friend, the Commodore, had been long engaged with those ships, and I came happily to his relief, for he was dreadfully mauled. Having engaged them until their fire ceased on me, though their

colours were not down, I went on to the *Santissima Trinidada*,<sup>\*</sup> the Spanish Admiral Cordova's ship, of 132 guns, on four complete decks—such a ship as I never saw before. By this time our masts, sails, and rigging, were so much shot, that we could not get so near her as I would have been ; but near enough to receive much injury from her, both in my men and ship. We were engaged an hour with this ship, and trimmed her well ; she was a complete wreck. Several others of our ships came up, and engaged her at the same time ; but evening approaching, and the fresh Spaniards coming down upon us, the Admiral made the signal to withdraw, carrying off the four ships that had surrendered to our fleet.

The ships longest and most engaged were, *Culloden*, Captain Troubridge ; *Captain*, Commodore Nelson ; the *Blenheim*, Captain Frederick ; and *Prince George*, Rear-Admiral W. Parker and Captain Irwin. I had eleven men killed, and many wounded : everybody did well. I am persuaded there will be no complaints of this little fleet ; and when the disparity of force is considered, the taking two first-rates, with two flag-officers, is a new thing. I have got a Spanish double-headed shot, fired from the *Santissima Trinidada*, which I intend as a present to your father, to put amongst his curiosities : it weighs 50 lb. These are no jokes, when they fly about one's head. God bless you ! my dearest love ; may you ever be happy !

## IN THE INTERESTS OF EUROPE<sup>1</sup>

(*The Duke of Wellington*)

Lesaca, 8 Aug. 1813

IT is a very common error, among those unacquainted with military affairs, to believe that there are no limits to military success. After having driven the French from the frontiers of Portugal and Madrid to the frontiers of France, it is generally expected that we shall immediately invade France ; and some even here expect that we shall be at Paris in a month. None appear to have taken a correct view of our situation on the frontier, of which the enemy still possess all the strongholds within Spain itself ; of which strongholds, or at least some of them, we must get possession before the season closes, or we shall have no communication whatever with the interior of Spain. Then in France, on the same great communications, there are other strongholds, of which we must likewise get possession.

An army which has made such marches, and has fought such battles, as that under my command has, is necessarily much deteriorated. Independently of the actual loss of numbers by death, wounds, and sickness, many men and officers are out of the ranks for various causes. The equipment of the army, their ammunition, the soldiers' shoes, &c., require renewal ; the magazines for the new operations require to be collected and formed, and many arrangements to be

<sup>1</sup> To Earl Bathurst. (*Ibid.*)

made, without which the army could not exist a day, but which are not generally understood by those who have not had the direction of such concerns in their hands. Then observe, that this new operation is only the invasion of France, in which country everybody is a soldier, where the whole population is armed and organized, under persons, not, as in other countries, inexperienced in arms, but men who, in the course of the last twenty-five years, in which France has been engaged in war with all Europe, must, the majority of them, at least, have served somewhere.

I entertain no doubt that I could to-morrow enter France, and establish the army on the Adour, but I could go no farther certainly. If peace should be made by the Powers of the North, I must necessarily withdraw into Spain ; and the retreat, however short, would be difficult, on account of the hostility and the warlike disposition of the inhabitants, particularly of this part of the country, and the military direction they would receive from the gentry their leaders. To this add, that the difficulty of all that must be done to set the army to rights, after its late severe battles and victories, will be much increased by its removal into France at an early period ; and that it must stop short in the autumn, if it now moves at too early a period.

So far for the immediate invasion of France, which, from what I have seen of the state of the negotiations in the north of Europe, I have determined to consider only in reference to the convenience of my own operations.

The next point for consideration is the proposal of the Duc de Berri to join this army, taking the command of the 20,000 men who he says are ready, organized,

and even armed, in order to act with us. My opinion is, that the interests of the House of Bourbon and of all Europe are the same, viz. in some manner or other, to get the better and rid of Buonaparte.

Although, therefore, the allies in the north of Europe, and even Great Britain and Spain, might not be prepared to go the length of declaring that they would not lay down their arms till Buonaparte should be dethroned, they would be justified in taking this assistance from the House of Bourbon and their French party who are dissatisfied with the government of Buonaparte. It might be a question with the House of Bourbon, whether they would involve their partisans in France upon any thing short of such a declaration, but none with the allies whether they would receive such assistance. Indeed, there would scarcely be a question for the Princes of the House of Bourbon if they are acquainted with the real nature and extent of Buonaparte's power. He rests internally upon the most extensive and expensive system of corruption that was ever established in any country, and externally upon his military power, which is supported almost exclusively by foreign contributions. If he can be confined to the limits of France by any means, his system must fall. He cannot bear the expense of his internal government and of his army ; and the reduction of either would be fatal to him. Any measures, therefore, which should go only to confine him to France would forward, and ultimately attain, the objects of the House of Bourbon and of their partisans.

If the House of Bourbon and the allies, however, do not concur in this reasoning, we must then, before the Duc de Berri is allowed to join the army, get from the allies in the north of Europe a declaration how far

they will persevere in the contest with a view to dethrone Buonaparte ; and the British Government must make up their minds on the question, and come to an understanding upon it with those of the Peninsula.

## FIVE WEEKS AFTER THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

(*Sir Walter Scott*)

Paris, 6 Sept. 1815

I OWE you<sup>1</sup> a long letter, but my late travels and the date of this epistle will be a tolerable plea for your indulgence. The truth is, I became very restless after the battle of Waterloo, and was only detained by the necessity of attending a friend's marriage from setting off instantly for the Continent. At length, however, I got away to Brussels, and was on the memorable field of battle about five weeks after it had been fought. . . .

The fate of the French, after this day of decisive appeal, has been severe enough. There were never people more mortified, more subdued, and apparently more broken in spirit. They submit with sad civility to the extortions of the Prussians and the Russians, and avenge themselves at the expense of the English, whom they charge three prices for everything, because they are the only people who pay at all. They are in the right, however, to enforce discipline and good order, which not only maintains the national character in the meantime, but will prevent the army from suffering by habits of indulgence. I question if the Prussians will soon regain their discipline and habits

<sup>1</sup> Joanna Baillie. (The second paragraph is here omitted.)

of hardihood. At present their powers of eating and drinking, which are really something preternatural, are exerted to the very utmost. A thin Prussian boy, whom I sometimes see, eats in one day as much as three English ploughmen. At daybreak he roars for chocolate and eggs ; about nine he breakfasts more solemnly *à la fourchette*, when, besides all the usual apparatus of an English *déjeuner*, he eats a world of cutlets, oysters, fruit, &c., and drinks a glass of brandy, and a bottle of champagne. His dinner might serve Gargantua, at which he gets himself about three parts drunk—a circumstance which does not prevent the charge upon cold meat, with tea and chocolate, about six o'clock ; and concluding the whole with an immense supper. Positively the appetite of this lad reminds one of the Eastern tale of a man taken out of the sea by a ship's crew, who, in return, ate up all the provisions of the vessel. He was, I think, flown away with by a roc ; but from what quarter of the heavens the French are to look for deliverance from these devourers, I cannot presume to guess.

The needless wreck and ruin which they make in the houses, adds much to the inconvenience of their presence. Most of the châteaux, where the Prussians are quartered, are what is technically called *rumped*, that is to say, plundered out and out. In the fine château of Montmorency, for instance, the most splendid apartments, highly ornamented with gilding and carving, were converted into barracks for the dirtiest and most savage-looking hussars I have yet seen. Imagine the work these fellows make with velvet hangings and embroidery. I saw one hag boiling her camp-kettle with part of a picture frame ; the picture itself has probably gone to Prussia. With

all this greediness and love of mischief, the Prussians are not blood-thirsty ; and their utmost violence seldom exceeds a blow or two with the flat of the sabre. They are also very civil to the women and in both respects behave much better than the French did in their country ; but they follow the bad example quite close enough for the sake of humanity and of discipline. As for our people, they live in a most orderly and regular manner. All the young men pique themselves on imitating the Duke of Wellington in *nonchalance* and coolness of manner ; so they wander about everywhere, with their hands in the pockets of their long waistcoats, or cantering upon Cossack ponies, staring and whistling, and trotting to and fro, as if all Paris was theirs. The French hate them sufficiently for the *hauteur* of their manner and pretensions, but the grounds of dislike against us are drowned in the actual detestation afforded by the other powers.

This morning I saw a grand military spectacle—about 20,000 Russians pass in review before all the Kings and Dominations who are now resident at Paris. The Emperor, King of Prussia, Duke of Wellington, with their numerous and brilliant attendance of generals, staff-officers, &c., were in the centre of what is called the Place Louis Quinze, almost on the very spot where Louis XVI was beheaded. A very long avenue, which faces the station where they were placed, was like a glowing furnace, so fiercely were the sunbeams reflected from the arms of the host by which it was filled. A body of Cossacks kept the ground with their pikes, and, by their wild appearance, added to the singularity of the scene. On one hand was the extended line of the Tuileries, seen through the gardens and the rows of orange-trees ; on the other,

the long column of troops advancing to the music. Behind was a long colonnade, forming the front to the palace, where the Chamber of Representatives are to hold their sittings ; and in front of the monarchs was a superb row of buildings, on which you distinguish the bronze pillar erected by Napoleon to commemorate his victories over Russia, Prussia, and Austria, whose princes were now reviewing their victorious armies in what was so lately his capital. Your fancy, my dear friend, will anticipate, better than I can express, the thousand sentiments which arose in my mind from witnessing such a splendid scene, in a spot connected with such various associations. It may give you some idea of the feelings of the French—once so fond of *spectacles*—to know that, I think, there were not a hundred of that nation looking on. Yet this country will soon recover the actual losses she has sustained, for never was there a soil so blessed by nature, or so rich in corn, wine, and oil, and in the animated industry of its inhabitants. France is at present the fabled giant, struggling, or rather lying supine, under the load of mountains which have been precipitated on her ; but she is not, and cannot be crushed. Remove the incumbent weight of 600,000 or 700,000 foreigners, and she will soon stand upright—happy, if experience shall have taught her to be contented to exert her natural strength only for her own protection, and not for the annoyance of her neighbours. I am cut short in my lucubrations, by an opportunity to send this letter with Lord Castlereagh's dispatches ; which is of less consequence, as I will endeavour to see you in passing through London. I leave this city for Dieppe on Saturday, but I intend to go round by Harfleur, if possible.

## AN ANTIQUARY'S STUDY

(*Sir Walter Scott*)

'BUT come, let me show you the way into my *sanctum sanctorum*—my cell I may call it, for, except two idle hussies of womankind' (by this contemptuous phrase, borrowed from his brother antiquary, the cynic Anthony a-Wood, Mr. Oldbuck was used to denote the fair sex in general, and his sister and niece in particular), 'that, on some idle pretext of relationship, have established themselves in my premises, I live here as much a Coenobite as my predecessor, John o' the Gurnell, whose grave I will show you by and by.'

Thus speaking, the old gentleman led the way through a low door; but, before entrance, suddenly stopped short to point out some vestiges of what he called an inscription, and, shaking his head as he pronounced it totally illegible, 'Ah! if you but knew, Mr. Lovel, the time and trouble that these mouldering traces of letters have cost me! No mother ever travailed so for a child—and all to no purpose—although I am almost positive that these two last marks imply the figures, or letters, LV, and may give us a good guess at the real date of the building, since we know, *aliunde*, that it was founded by Abbot Waldimir about the middle of the fourteenth century—and, I profess, I think that centre ornament might be made out by better eyes than mine.'

'I think,' answered Lovel, willing to humour the

old man, ‘it has something the appearance of a mitre.’

‘I protest you are right ! you are right ! it never struck me before—see what it is to have younger eyes —A mitre—a mitre—it corresponds in every respect.’

The resemblance was not much nearer than that of Polonius’s cloud to a whale, or an ouzel ; it was sufficient, however, to set the Antiquary’s brains to work. ‘A mitre, my dear sir,’ continued he, as he led the way through a labyrinth of inconvenient and dark passages, and accompanied his disquisition with certain necessary cautions to his guest—‘A mitre, my dear sir, will suit our abbot as well as a bishop—he was a mitred abbot, and at the very top of the roll—take care of these three steps—I know Mac-Cribb denies this, but it is as certain as that he took away my Antigonus, no leave asked—you’ll see the name of the Abbot of Trotcosey, *Abbas Trottocosiensis*, at the head of the rolls of parliament in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—there is very little light here, and these cursed womankind always leave their tubs in the passage—now take care of the corner—ascend twelve steps, and ye are safe !’

Mr. Oldbuck had by this time attained the top of the winding stair which led to his own apartment, and opening a door, and pushing aside a piece of tapestry with which it was covered, his first exclamation was, ‘What are you about here, you sluts ?’ A dirty bare-footed chambermaid threw down her duster, detected in the heinous fact of arranging the *sanctum sanctorum*, and fled out of an opposite door from the face of her incensed master. A genteel-looking young woman, who was superintending the operation, stood her ground, but with some timidity.

‘Indeed, uncle, your room was not fit to be seen, and I just came to see that Jenny laid everything down where she took it up.’

‘And how dare you, or Jenny either, presume to meddle with my private matters?’ (Mr. Oldbuck hated *putting to rights* as much as Dr. Orkborne, or any other professed student.) ‘Go sew your sampler, you monkey, and do not let me find you here again, as you value your ears.—I assure you, Mr. Lovel, that the last inroad of these pretended friends to cleanliness was almost as fatal to my collection as Hudibras’s visit to that of Sidrophel ; and I have ever since missed

My copperplate, with almanacks ;  
Engraved upon’t, and other knacks ;  
My moon-dial, with Napier’s bones,  
And several constellation stones ;  
My flea, my morpeon, and punaise,  
I purchased for my proper ease.

And so forth, as old Butler has it.’

The young lady, after curtseying to Lovel, had taken the opportunity to make her escape during this enumeration of losses. ‘You’ll be poisoned here with the volumes of dust they have raised,’ continued the Antiquary ; ‘but I assure you the dust was very ancient, peaceful, quiet dust, about an hour ago, and would have remained so for a hundred years, had not these gipsies disturbed it, as they do everything else in the world.’

It was indeed some time before Lovel could, through the thick atmosphere, perceive in what sort of den his friend had constructed his retreat. It was a lofty room, of middling size, obscurely lighted by high narrow latticed windows. One end was entirely occupied by

book-shelves, greatly too limited in space for the number of volumes placed upon them, which were, therefore, drawn up in ranks of two or three files deep, while numberless others littered the floor and the tables, amid a chaos of maps, engravings, scraps of parchment, bundles of papers, pieces of old armour, swords, dirks, helmets, and Highland targets. Behind Mr. Oldbuck's seat (which was an ancient leather-covered easy chair, worn smooth by constant use) was a huge oaken cabinet, decorated at each corner with Dutch cherubs, having their little duck-wings displayed, and great jolter-headed visages placed between them. The top of this cabinet was covered with busts, and Roman lamps and paterae, intermingled with one or two bronze figures. The walls of the apartment were partly clothed with grim old tapestry, representing the memorable story of Sir Gawaine's wedding, in which full justice was done to the ugliness of the Lothely Lady ; although, to judge from his own looks, the gentle knight had less reason to be disgusted with the match on account of disparity of outward favour, than the romancer has given us to understand. The rest of the room was panelled, or wainscoted, with black oak, against which hung two or three portraits in armour, being characters in Scottish history, favourites of Mr. Oldbuck, and as many in tie-wigs and laced-coats, staring representatives of his own ancestors. A large old-fashioned oaken table was covered with a profusion of papers, parchments, books, and nondescript trinkets and gewgaws, which seemed to have little to recommend them besides rust and the antiquity which it indicates. In the midst of this wreck of ancient books and utensils, with a gravity equal to Marius among the ruins of Carthage, sat a large black

cat, which, to a superstitious eye, might have presented the *genius loci*, the tutelar demon of the apartment. The floor, as well as the table and chairs, was overflowed by the same *mare magnum* of miscellaneous trumpery, where it would have been as impossible to find any individual article wanted, as to put it to any use when discovered.

## IRISH BULLS

(*Sydney Smith*)

THE object of the book <sup>1</sup> is to prove that the practice of making bulls is not more imputable to the Irish than to any other people ; and the manner in which he sets about it, is to quote examples of bulls produced in other countries. But this is surely a singular way of reasoning the question : for there are goîtres out of the Valais, extortioners who do not worship Moses, oat cakes over the Tweed, and balm beyond the precincts of Gilead. If nothing can be said to exist pre-eminently and emphatically in one country, which exists at all in another, then Frenchmen are not gay, nor Spaniards grave, nor are gentlemen of the Milesian race remarkable for their disinterested contempt of wealth in their connubial relations. It is probable there is some foundation for a character so generally diffused ; though it is also probable that such foundation is extremely enlarged by fame. If there were no foundation for the common opinion, we must suppose national characters formed by chance ; and that the Irish might, by accident, have been laughed at as bashful and sheepish ; which is impossible. The author puzzles himself a good deal about the nature of bulls, without coming to any decision about the matter. Though the question is not a very easy one, we shall venture to say, that a bull is an apparent

<sup>1</sup> Richard and Maria Edgeworth, *An Essay on Irish Bulls*, 1802.

congruity and real incongruity of ideas suddenly discovered. And if this account of bulls be just, they are (as might have been supposed) the very reverse of wit ; for as wit discovers real relations that are not apparent, bulls admit apparent relations that are not real. The pleasure arising from wit proceeds from our surprise at suddenly discovering two things to be similar in which we suspected no similarity. The pleasure arising from bulls proceeds from our discovering two things to be dissimilar in which a resemblance might have been suspected. The same doctrine will apply to wit and to bulls in action. Practical wit discovers connexion or relation between actions, in which duller understandings discover none ; and practical bulls originate from an *apparent* relation between two actions, which more correct understandings immediately perceive to have no relation at all.

Louis XIV, being extremely harassed by the repeated solicitations of a veteran officer for promotion, said one day, loud enough to be heard, ‘That gentleman is the most troublesome officer I have in my service’. ‘That is precisely the charge (said the old man) which your Majesty’s enemies bring against me.’

‘An English gentleman [says Mr. Edgeworth, in a story cited from Joe Miller] was writing a letter in a coffee-house ; and perceiving that an Irishman stationed behind him was taking that liberty which Parmenio used with his friend Alexander, instead of putting his seal upon the lips of the *curious impertinent*, the English gentleman thought proper to reprove the Hibernian, if not with delicacy, at least with poetical justice. He concluded writing his letter in these words : “I would say more, but a damned tall Irishman is reading over my shoulder every word I write.”

“ ‘ You lie, you scoundrel,’ ” said the self-convicted Hibernian.

The pleasure derived from the first of these stories proceeds from the discovery of the relation that subsists between the object he had in view, and the assent of the officer to an observation so unfriendly to that end. In the first rapid glance which the mind throws upon his words, he appears, by his acquiescence, to be pleading against himself. There seems to be no relation between what he says and what he wishes to effect by speaking.

In the second story, the pleasure is directly the reverse. The lie given was *apparently* the readiest means of proving his innocence, and *really* the most effectual way of establishing his guilt. There seems for a moment to be a strong relation between the means and the object ; while, in fact, no irrelation can be so complete.

What connexion is there between pelting stones at monkeys and gathering coco-nuts from lofty trees ? Apparently none. But monkeys sit upon coco-nut trees ; monkeys are imitative animals ; and if you pelt a monkey with a stone, he pelts you with a coco-nut in return. This scheme of gathering coco-nuts is very witty, and would be more so, if it did not appear useful : for the idea of utility is always inimical to the idea of wit. There appears, on the contrary, to be some relation between the revenge of the Irish rebels against a banker, and the means which they took to gratify it, by burning all his notes wherever they found them ; whereas, they could not have rendered him a more essential service. In both these cases of bulls, the one verbal, the other practical, there is an apparent congruity and real incongruity of ideas. In both the cases of wit, there is an apparent incongruity and a real relation.

It is clear that a bull cannot depend upon mere incongruity alone ; for if a man were to say that he would ride to London upon a cocked hat, or that he would cut his throat with a pound of pickled salmon, this, though completely incongruous, would not be to make bulls, but to talk nonsense. The stronger the apparent connexion, and the more complete the real disconnection of the ideas, the greater the surprise and the better the bull. The less apparent, and the more complete the relations established by wit, the higher gratification does it afford. A great deal of the pleasure experienced from bulls proceeds from the sense of superiority in ourselves. Bulls which we invented, or knew to be invented, might please, but in a less degree, for want of this additional zest.

As there must be apparent connexion, and real incongruity, it is seldom that a man of sense and education finds any form of words by which he is conscious that he might have been deceived into a bull. To conceive how the person has been deceived, he must suppose a degree of information very different from, and a species of character very heterogeneous to, his own ; a process which diminishes surprise, and consequently pleasure. In the above-mentioned story of the Irishman overlooking the man writing, no person of ordinary sagacity can suppose himself betrayed into such a mistake ; but he can easily represent to himself a kind of character that might have been so betrayed. There are some bulls so extremely fallacious, that any man may imagine himself to have been betrayed into them ; but these are rare : and, in general, it is a poor contemptible species of amusement ; a delight in which evinces a very bad taste in wit.

## THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

(*Robert Southey*)

A LONG swell was setting into the bay of Cadiz : our ships, crowding all sail, moved majestically before it, with light winds from the south-west. The sun shone on the sails of the enemy ; and their well-formed line, with their numerous three-deckers, made an appearance which any other assailants would have thought formidable ;—but the British sailors only admired the beauty and the splendour of the spectacle ; and, in full confidence of winning what they saw, remarked to each other, what a fine sight yonder ships would make at Spithead !

The French admiral, from the *Bucentaure*, beheld the new manner in which his enemy was advancing—Nelson and Collingwood each leading his line ; and, pointing them out to his officers, he is said to have exclaimed, that such conduct could not fail to be successful. Yet Villeneuve had made his own dispositions with the utmost skill, and the fleets under his command waited for the attack with perfect coolness. Ten minutes before twelve they opened their fire. Eight or nine of the ships immediately ahead of the *Victory*, and across her bows, fired single guns at her, to ascertain whether she was yet within their range. As soon as Nelson perceived that their shot passed over him, he desired Blackwood, and Capt. Prowse, of the *Sirius*, to repair to their respective frigates ; and, on

their way, to tell all the captains of the line of battle ships that he depended on their exertions ; and that, if by the prescribed mode of attack they found it impracticable to get into action immediately, they might adopt whatever they thought best, provided it led them quickly and closely alongside an enemy. As they were standing on the front of the poop, Blackwood took him by the hand, saying, he hoped soon to return and find him in possession of twenty prizes. He replied, ‘ God bless you, Blackwood : I shall never see you again’.

Nelson’s column was steered about two points more to the north than Collingwood’s, in order to cut off the enemy’s escape into Cadiz : the lee line, therefore, was first engaged. ‘ See,’ cried Nelson, pointing to the *Royal Sovereign*, as she steered right for the centre of the enemy’s line, cut through it astern of the *Santa Anna*, three-decker, and engaged her at the muzzle of her guns on the starboard side : ‘ see how that noble fellow, Collingwood, carries his ship into action ! ’ Collingwood, delighted at being first in the heat of the fire, and knowing the feelings of his commander and old friend, turned to his captain, and exclaimed : ‘ Rotherham, what would Nelson give to be here ! ’ Both these brave officers, perhaps, at this moment thought of Nelson with gratitude, for a circumstance which had occurred on the preceding day. Admiral Collingwood, with some of the captains, having gone on board the *Victory*, to receive instructions, Nelson inquired of him, where his captain was ? and was told, in reply, that they were not upon good terms with each other ! ’ ‘ Terms ! ’ said Nelson ; ‘ good terms with each other ! ’ Immediately he sent a boat for Captain Rotherham ; led him, as soon as he

arrived, to Collingwood, and saying,—‘ Look ; yonder are the enemy ! ’ bade them shake hands like Englishmen.

The enemy continued to fire a gun at a time at the *Victory*, till they saw that a shot had passed through her main-top-gallant sail ; then they opened their broadsides, aiming chiefly at her rigging, in the hope of disabling her before she could close with them. Nelson, as usual, had hoisted several flags, lest one should be shot away. The enemy showed no colours till late in the action, when they began to feel the necessity of having them to strike. For this reason, the *Santissima Trinidadada*, Nelson’s old acquaintance, as he used to call her, was distinguishable only by her four decks ; and to the bow of this opponent he ordered the *Victory* to be steered. Meantime an incessant raking fire was kept up upon the *Victory*. The admiral’s secretary was one of the first who fell ; he was killed by a cannon shot while conversing with Hardy. Capt. Adair of the marines, with the help of a sailor, endeavoured to remove the body from Nelson’s sight, who had a great regard for Mr. Scott : but he anxiously asked : ‘ Is that poor Scott that’s gone ? ’ and being informed that it was indeed so, exclaimed : ‘ Poor fellow ! ’ Presently a double-headed shot struck a party of marines, who were drawn up on the poop, and killed eight of them : upon which, Nelson immediately desired Capt. Adair to disperse his men round the ship, that they might not suffer so much from being together. A few minutes afterwards a shot struck the fore-brace bits on the quarter-deck, and passed between Nelson and Hardy, a splinter from the bit tearing off Hardy’s buckle and bruising his foot. Both stopped, and looked anxiously at each other, each supposed the

other to be wounded. Nelson then smiled, and said, ‘This is too warm work, Hardy, to last long’.

The *Victory* had not yet returned a single gun ; fifty of her men had been by this time killed or wounded, and her main-top-mast, with all her studding sails and her booms, shot away. Nelson declared, that, in all his battles, he had seen nothing which surpassed the cool courage of his crew on this occasion. At four minutes after twelve, she opened her fire from both sides of her deck. It was not possible to break the enemy’s line without running on board one of their ships : Hardy informed him of this, and asked him which he would prefer. Nelson replied : ‘Take your choice, Hardy, it does not signify much.’ The master was ordered to put the helm to port, and the *Victory* ran on board the *Redoutable*, just as her tiller ropes were shot away. The French ship received her with a broadside ; then instantly let down her lower-deck ports, for fear of being boarded through them, and never afterwards fired a great gun during the action. Her tops, like those of all the enemy’s ships, were filled with riflemen. Nelson never placed musketry in his tops ; he had a strong dislike to the practice ; not merely because it endangers setting fire to the sails, but also because it is a murderous sort of warfare, by which individuals may suffer, and a commander now and then be picked off, but which never can decide the fate of a general engagement.

Capt. Harvey, in the *Téméraire*, fell on board the *Redoutable* on the other side. Another enemy was in like manner on board the *Téméraire* : so that these four ships formed as compact a tier as if they had been moored together, their heads lying all the same way. The lieutenants of the *Victory*, seeing this, depressed

their guns of the middle and lower decks, and fired with a diminished charge, lest the shot should pass through, and injure the *Téméraire*. And because there was danger that the *Redoubtable* might take fire from the lower-deck guns, the muzzles of which touched her side when they were run out, the fireman of each gun stood ready with a bucket of water ; which, as soon as the gun was discharged, he dashed into the hole made by the shot. An incessant fire was kept up from the *Victory* from both sides ; her larboard guns playing upon the *Bucentaure* and the huge *Santissima Trinidad*.

It had been part of Nelson's prayer that the British fleet might be distinguished by humanity in the victory which he expected. Setting an example himself, he twice gave orders to cease firing upon the *Redoubtable*, supposing that she had struck, because her great guns were silent ; for, as she carried no flag, there was no means of instantly ascertaining the fact. From this ship, which he had thus twice spared, he received his death. A ball fired from her mizen-top, which, in the then situation of the two vessels, was not more than fifteen yards from that part of the deck where he was standing, struck the epaulette on his left shoulder, about a quarter after one, just in the heat of action. He fell upon his face, on the spot which was covered with his poor secretary's blood. Hardy, who was a few steps from him, turning round, saw three men raising him up.—‘They have done for me at last, Hardy,’ said he.

## ENGLAND ON THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VII IN 1485

(*Henry Hallam*)

THE general privileges of the nation were far more secure than those of private men. Great violence was often used by the various officers of the Crown, for which no adequate redress could be procured ; the courts of justice were not strong enough, whatever might be their temper, to chastise such aggressions ; juries, through intimidation or ignorance, returned such verdicts as were desired by the Crown ; and, in general, there was perhaps little effective restraint upon the government, except in the two articles of levying money and enacting laws.

The peers alone, a small body varying from about fifty to eighty persons, enjoyed the privileges of aristocracy, which, except that of sitting in parliament, were not very considerable, far less oppressive. All below them, even their children, were commoners, and in the eye of the law equal to each other. In the gradation of ranks, which, if not legally recognized, must still subsist through the necessary inequalities of birth and wealth, we find the gentry or principal landholders, many of them distinguished by knighthood, and all by bearing coat armour, but without any exclusive privilege ; the yeomanry, or small freeholders and farmers, a very numerous and respectable body, some occupying their own estates, some those of landlords ;

the burgesses and inferior inhabitants of trading towns ; and, lastly, the peasantry and labourers. Of these, in earlier times, a considerable part, though not perhaps so very large a proportion as is usually taken for granted, had been in the ignominious state of villenage, incapable of possessing property but at the will of their lords. They had, however, gradually been raised above this servitude ; many had acquired a stable possession of lands under the name of copyholders ; and the condition of mere villenage was become rare.

The three courts at Westminster—the King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer—consisting each of four or five judges, administered justice to the whole kingdom ; the first having an appellate jurisdiction over the second, and the third being in a great measure confined to causes affecting the Crown's property. But as all suits relating to land, as well as most others, and all criminal indictments, could only be determined, so far as they depended upon oral evidence, by a jury of the county, it was necessary that justices of assize and gaol-delivery, being in general the judges of the courts at Westminster, should travel into each county, commonly twice a year, in order to try issues of fact, so called in distinction from issues of law, where the suitors, admitting all essential facts, disputed the rule applicable to them. By this device, which is as ancient as the reign of Henry II, the fundamental privilege of trial by jury, and the convenience of private suitors, as well as accused persons, was made consistent with a uniform jurisprudence ; and though the reference of every legal question, however insignificant, to the courts above must have been inconvenient and expensive in a still greater degree than at present, it had doubtless a powerful tendency to knit together

the different parts of England, to check the influence of feudalism and clanship, to make the inhabitants of distant counties better acquainted with the capital city and more accustomed to the course of government, and to impair the spirit of provincial patriotism and animosity. The minor tribunals of each county, hundred, and manor, respectable for their antiquity and for their effect in preserving a sense of freedom and justice, had in a great measure, though not probably so much as in modern times, gone into disuse. In a few counties there still remained a palatine jurisdiction, exclusive of the king's courts ; but in these the common rules of law and the mode of trial by jury were preserved. Justices of the peace, appointed out of the gentlemen of each county, inquired into criminal charges, committed offenders to prison, and tried them at their quarterly sessions, according to the same forms as the judges of gaol-delivery. The chartered towns had their separate jurisdiction under the municipal magistracy.

The laws against theft were severe, and capital punishments unsparingly inflicted. Yet they had little effect in repressing acts of violence, to which a rude and licentious state of manners, and very imperfect dispositions for preserving the public peace, naturally gave rise. These were frequently perpetrated or instigated by men of superior wealth and power, above the control of the mere officers of justice. Meanwhile the kingdom was increasing in opulence, the English merchants possessed a large share of the trade of the north ; and a woollen manufacture, established in different parts of the kingdom, had not only enabled the legislature to restrain the import of cloths, but had begun to supply foreign nations. The population may

probably be reckoned, without any material error, at about three millions, but by no means distributed in the same proportions as at present ; the northern counties, especially Lancashire and Cumberland, being very ill peopled, and the inhabitants of London and Westminster, not exceeding sixty or seventy thousand.

—*Constitutional History of England.*

## THE EXECUTION AND CHARACTER OF CHARLES I

(*Henry Hallam*)

THE line is not easily drawn, in abstract reasoning, between the treason which is justly punished, and the social schism which is beyond the proper boundaries of law ; but the civil war of England seems plainly to fall within the latter description. These objections strike me as unanswerable, even if the trial of Charles had been sanctioned by the voice of the nation through its legitimate representatives, or at least such a fair and full convention as might, in great necessity, supply the place of lawful authority. But it was, as we all know, the act of a bold but very small minority, who having forcibly expelled their colleagues from parliament, had usurped, under the protection of a military force, that power which all England reckoned illegal. I cannot perceive what there was in the imagined solemnity of this proceeding, in that insolent mockery of the forms of justice, accompanied by all unfairness and inhumanity in its circumstances, which can alleviate the guilt of the transaction ; and if it be alleged that many of the regicides were firmly persuaded in their consciences of the right and duty of condemning the king, we may surely remember that private murderers have often had the same apology.

In discussing each particular transaction in the life of Charles, as of any other sovereign, it is required by

the truth of history to spare no just animadversion upon his faults ; especially where much art has been employed by the writers most in repute to carry the stream of public prejudice in an opposite direction. But when we come to a general estimate of his character, we should act unfairly not to give their full weight to those peculiar circumstances of his condition in this worldly scene, which tend to account for and extenuate his failings. The station of kings is, in a moral sense, so unfavourable, that those who are least prone to servile admiration should be on their guard against the opposite error of an uncandid severity. There seems no fairer method of estimating the intrinsic worth of a sovereign, than to treat him as a subject, and to judge, so far as the history of his life enables us, what he would have been in that more private and happier condition, from which the chance of birth has excluded him. Tried by this test, we cannot doubt that Charles I would have been not altogether an amiable man, but one deserving of general esteem ; his firm and conscientious virtues the same, his deviations from right far less frequent, than upon the throne. It is to be pleaded for this prince that his youth had breathed but the contaminated air of a profligate and servile court, that he had imbibed the lessons of arbitrary power from all who surrounded him, that he had been betrayed by a father's culpable blindness into the dangerous society of an ambitious, unprincipled favourite. To have maintained so much correctness of morality as his enemies confess, was a proof of Charles's virtuous dispositions ; but his advocates are compelled also to own that he did not escape as little injured by the poisonous adulation to which he had listened. Of a temper by nature, and by want of

restraint, too passionate, though not vindictive ; and, though not cruel, certainly deficient in gentleness and humanity, he was entirely unfit for the very difficult station of royalty, and especially for that of a constitutional king. It is impossible to excuse his violations of liberty on the score of ignorance, especially after the Petition of Right ; because his impatience of opposition from his council made it unsafe to give him any advice that thwarted his determination. His other great fault was want of sincerity—a fault that appeared in all parts of his life, and from which no one who has paid the subject any attention will pretend to exculpate him. Those indeed who know nothing but what they find in Hume may believe, on Hume's authority, that the king's contemporaries never dreamed of imputing to him any deviation from good faith ; as if the whole conduct of the parliament had not been evidently founded upon a distrust, which on many occasions they very explicitly declared. But, so far as this insincerity was shown in the course of his troubles, it was a failing which untoward circumstances are apt to produce, and which the extreme hypocrisy of many among his adversaries might sometimes palliate. Few personages in history, we should recollect, have had so much of their actions revealed, and commented upon, as Charles ; it is perhaps a mortifying truth that those who have stood highest with posterity, have seldom been those who have been most accurately known.

The turn of his mind was rather peculiar, and laid him open with some justice to very opposite censures—for an extreme obstinacy in retaining his opinion, and for an excessive facility in adopting that of others. But the apparent incongruity ceases, when we observe that he was tenacious of ends, and irresolute as to

means ; better fitted to reason than to act ; never swerving from a few main principles, but diffident of his own judgement in its application to the course of affairs. His chief talent was an acuteness in dispute ; a talent not usually much exercised by kings, but which the strange events of his life called into action. He had, unfortunately for himself, gone into the study most fashionable in that age, of polemical theology ; and, though not at all learned, had read enough of the English divines to maintain their side of the current controversies with much dexterity. But this unkingly talent was a poor compensation for the continual mistakes of his judgement in the art of government and the conduct of his affairs.—*Constitutional History of England.*

## A BOXING MATCH—IN THE DAYS BEFORE GLOVES

(*William Hazlitt*)

THE *swells* were parading in their white box-coats, the outer ring was cleared with some bruises on the heads and shins of the rustic assembly (for the *cockneys* had been distanced by the sixty-six miles) ; the time drew near ; I had got a good stand ; a bustle, a buzz, ran through the crowd ; and from the opposite side entered Neate, between his second and bottle-holder. He rolled along, swathed in his loose greatcoat, his knock-knees bending under his huge bulk ; and, with a modest, cheerful air, threw his hat into the ring. He then just looked round, and began quietly to undress ; when from the other side there was a similar rush and an opening made, and the Gas-man<sup>1</sup> came forward with a conscious air of anticipated triumph, too much like the cock-of-the-walk. He strutted about more than became a hero, sucked oranges with a supercilious air, and threw away the skin with a toss of his head, and went up and looked at Neate, which was an act of supererogation. The only sensible thing he did was, as he strode away from the modern Ajax, to fling out his arms, as if he wanted to try whether they would do their work that day. By this time they had stripped, and presented a strong contrast in

<sup>1</sup> As Hickman was called.

appearance. If Neate was like Ajax, ‘with Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear’ the pugilistic reputation of all Bristol, Hickman might be compared to Diomed, light, vigorous, elastic, and his back glistened in the sun, as he moved about, like a panther’s hide. There was now a dead pause—attention was awe-struck. Who at that moment, big with a great event, did not draw his breath short—did not feel his heart throb? All was ready. They tossed up for the sun, and the Gas-man won. They were led up to the *scratch*—shook hands, and went at it.

In the first round every one thought it was all over. After making play a short time, the Gas-man flew at his adversary like a tiger, struck five blows in as many seconds, three first, and then following him as he staggered back, two more, right and left, and down he fell, a mighty ruin. There was a shout, and I said, ‘There is no standing this’. Neate seemed like a lifeless lump of flesh and bone, round which the Gas-man’s blows played with the rapidity of electricity or lightning, and you imagined he would only be lifted up to be knocked down again. It was as if Hickman held a sword or a fire in that right hand of his, and directed it against an unarmed body. They met again, and Neate seemed, not cowed, but particularly cautious. I saw his teeth clenched together and his brows knit close against the sun. He held out both his arms at full length straight before him, like two sledge hammers, and raised his left an inch or two higher. The Gas-man could not get over this guard—they struck mutually and fell, but without advantage on either side. It was the same in the next round; but the balance of power was thus restored—the fate of the battle was suspended. No one could tell how

it would end. This was the only moment in which opinion was divided ; for, in the next, the Gas-man aiming a mortal blow at his adversary's neck, with his right hand, and failing from the length he had to reach, the other returned it with his left at full swing, planted a tremendous blow on his cheek-bone and eyebrow, and made a red ruin of that side of his face. The Gas-man went down, and there was another shout—a roar of triumph as the waves of fortune rolled tumultuously from side to side. This was a settler. Hickman got up, and ‘grinned horrible a ghastly smile’, yet he was evidently dashed in his opinion of himself ; it was the first time he had ever been so punished ; all one side of his face was perfect scarlet, and his right eye was closed in dingy blackness, as he advanced to the fight, less confident, but still determined. After one or two rounds, not receiving another such remembrancer, he rallied and went at it with his former impetuosity. But in vain. His strength had been weakened—his blows could not tell at such a distance—he was obliged to fling himself at his adversary, and could not strike from his feet ; and almost as regularly as he flew at him with his right hand, Neate warded the blow, or drew-back out of its reach, and felled him with the return of his left. There was little cautious sparring—no half-hits—no tapping and trifling, none of the *petit-maitreship* of the art—they were almost all knock-down blows : the fight was a good stand-up fight. The wonder was the half-minute time. If there had been a minute or more allowed between each round, it would have been intelligible how they should by degrees recover strength and resolution ; but to see two men smashed to the ground, smeared with gore, stunned, senseless, the breath beaten out of their

bodies ; and then, before you recover from the shock, to see them rise up with new strength and courage, stand ready to inflict or receive mortal offence, and rush upon each other ‘ like two clouds over the Caspian ’—this is the most astonishing thing of all :—this is the high and heroic state of man ! From this time forward the event became more certain every round ; and about the twelfth it seemed as if it must have been over. Hickman generally stood with his back to me ; but in the scuffle, he had changed positions, and Neate just then made a tremendous lunge at him, and hit him full in the face. It was doubtful whether he would fall backwards or forwards ; he hung suspended for a second or two, and then fell back, throwing his hands in the air, and with his face lifted up to the sky. I never saw anything more terrific than his aspect just before he fell. All traces of life, of natural expression, were gone from him. His face was like a human skull, a death’s head spouting blood. The eyes were filled with blood, the nose streamed with blood, the mouth gaped blood. He was not like an actual man, but like a preternatural, spectral appearance, or like one of the figures in Dante’s *Inferno*. Yet he fought on after this for several rounds, still striking the first desperate blow, and Neate standing on the defensive, and using the same cautious guard to the last, as if he had still all his work to do ; and it was not till the Gas-man was so stunned in the seventeenth or eighteenth round, that his senses forsook him, and he could not come to time, that the battle was declared over.

## RIP VAN WINKLE BEFORE HIS DISAPPEARANCE

(*Washington Irving*)

THE great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance ; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences ; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own ; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm ; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country ; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces ; his cow would either go

astray, or get among the cabbages ; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else ; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some outdoor work to do ; so that though his matrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment ; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife ; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the

outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master ; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honourable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue ? The moment Wolf entered the house, his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a side-long glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broom-stick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on ; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village ; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of his Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the

contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary ; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place !

## SATURDAY NIGHT : LONDON

(*Thomas de Quincey*)

THESE were my opera pleasures ; but another pleasure I had, which, as it could be had only on a Saturday night, occasionally struggled with my love of the opera ; for, in those years, Tuesday and Saturday were the regular opera nights. On this subject I am afraid I shall be rather obscure, but, I can assure the reader, not at all more so than Marinus in his *Life of Proclus*, or many other biographers and autobiographers of fair reputation. This pleasure, I have said, was to be had only on a Saturday night. What, then, was Saturday night to me more than any other night ? I had no labours that I rested from ; no wages to receive ; what needed I to care for Saturday night, more than as it was a summons to hear Grassini ? True, most logical reader ; what thou sayest is, and ever will be, unanswerable. And yet so it was that, whereas different men throw their feelings into different channels, and most men are apt to show their interest in the concerns of the poor chiefly by sympathy with their distresses and sorrows, I at that time was disposed to express mine by sympathizing with their pleasures. The pains of poverty I had lately seen too much of—more than I wished to remember ; but the pleasures of the poor, their hopes, their consolations of spirit, and their restings from toil, can never become oppressive to contemplate. Now, Saturday night is the season for

the chief regular and periodic return of rest to the poor, and to all that live by bodily labour ; in this point the most hostile sects unite, and acknowledge a common link of brotherhood : almost all Christendom rests from its labours. It is a rest introductory to another rest ; and divided by a whole day and two nights from the renewal of toil. On this account I feel always, on a Saturday night, as though I also were released from some yoke of bondage, had some wages to receive, and some luxury of repose to enjoy. For the sake, therefore, of witnessing, upon as large a scale as possible, a spectacle with which my sympathy was so entire, I used often, on Saturday nights, after I had taken opium, to wander forth, without much regarding the direction or the distance, to all the markets, and other parts of London, whither the poor resort on a Saturday night, for laying out their wages. Many a family party, consisting of a man, his wife, and sometimes one or two of their children, have I listened to, as they stood consulting on their ways and means, or the strength of their exchequer, or the price of household articles. Gradually I became familiar with their wishes, their difficulties, and their opinions. Sometimes there might be heard murmurs of discontent ; but far oftener expressions on the countenance, or uttered in words, of patience, of hope, and of reconciliation to their lot. Generally speaking, the impression left upon my mind was, that the poor are practically more philosophic than the rich ; that they show a more ready and cheerful submission to what they consider as irremediable evils or irreparable losses. Whenever I saw occasion, or could do it without appearing to be intrusive, I joined their parties, and gave my opinion upon the matter in discussion, which,

if not always judicious, was always received indulgently. If wages were a little higher, or were expected to be so —if the quartern loaf were a little lower, or it was reported that onions and butter were falling, I was glad ; yet, if the contrary were true, I drew from opium some means of consolation. For opium (like the bee, that extracts its materials indiscriminately from roses and from the soot of chimneys) can overrule all feelings into a compliance with the master-key. Some of these rambles led me to great distances ; for an opium-eater is too happy to observe the motion of time. And sometimes, in my attempts to steer homewards, upon nautical principles, by fixing my eye on the pole-star, and seeking ambitiously for a north-west passage, instead of circumnavigating all the capes and headlands I had doubled in my outward voyage, I came suddenly upon such knotty problems of alleys, alleys without soundings, such enigmatical entries, and such sphinx's riddles of streets, without obvious outlets or thoroughfares, as must baffle the audacity of porters, and confound the intellects of hackney coachmen. I could almost have believed, at times, that I must be the first discoverer of some of these *terrae incognitae*, and doubted whether they had yet been laid down in the modern charts of London. Positively, in one line of communication to the south of Holborn, for foot passengers (known, I doubt not, to many of my London readers), the road lay through a man's kitchen ; and as it was a small kitchen, you needed to steer cautiously, or else you might run foul of the dripping-pan.—*Confessions of an English Opium-Eater.*

## LISBON

(*George Borrow*)

I FOUND disembarkation at Lisbon to be a matter of considerable vexation ; the custom-house officers were exceedingly uncivil, and examined every article of my little baggage with most provoking minuteness.

My first impression on landing in the Peninsula was by no means a favourable one ; and I had scarcely pressed the soil one hour before I heartily wished myself back in Russia, a country which I had quitted about one month previous, and where I had left cherished friends and warm affections.

After having submitted to much ill usage and robbery at the custom-house, I proceeded in quest of a lodging, and at last found one, but dirty and expensive. The next day I hired a servant, a Portuguese, it being my invariable custom on arriving in a country to avail myself of the services of a native, chiefly with the view of perfecting myself in the language ; and being already acquainted with most of the principal languages and dialects of the east and the west, I am soon able to make myself quite intelligible to the inhabitants. In about a fortnight I found myself conversing in Portuguese with considerable fluency.

Those who wish to make themselves understood by a foreigner in his own language, should speak with much noise and vociferation, opening their mouths wide. Is it surprising that the English are, in general, the worst linguists in the world, seeing that they pursue a system diametrically opposite ? For example, when

they attempt to speak Spanish, the most sonorous tongue in existence, they scarcely open their lips, and putting their hands in their pockets, fumble lazily, instead of applying them to the indispensable office of gesticulation. Well may the poor Spaniards exclaim, *These English talk so crabbedly, that Satan himself would not be able to understand them.*

Lisbon is a huge ruinous city, still exhibiting in almost every direction the vestiges of that terrific visitation of God, the earthquake, which shattered it some eighty years ago. It stands on seven hills, the loftiest of which is occupied by the castle of Saint George, which is the boldest and most prominent object to the eye, whilst surveying the city from the Tagus. The most frequented and busy parts of the city are those comprised within the valley to the north of this elevation.

Here you find the Plaza of the Inquisition, the principal square in Lisbon, from which run parallel towards the river three or four streets, amongst which are those of the gold and silver, so designated from being inhabited by smiths cunning in the working of those metals ; they are upon the whole very magnificent ; the houses are huge and as high as castles ; immense pillars defend the causeway at intervals, producing, however, rather a cumbrous effect. These streets are quite level, and are well paved, in which respect they differ from all the others in Lisbon. The most singular street, however, of all is that of the Alemcrin, or Rosemary, which debouches on the Caesodré. It is very precipitous, and is occupied on either side by the palaces of the principal Portuguese nobility, massive and frowning, but grand and picturesque, edifices, with here and there a hanging garden, overlooking the streets at a great height.

With all its ruin and desolation, Lisbon is unquestionably the most remarkable city in the Peninsula, and, perhaps, in the south of Europe. It is not my intention to enter into minute details concerning it ; I shall content myself with remarking, that it is quite as much deserving the attention of the artist as even Rome itself. True it is that though it abounds with churches it has no gigantic cathedral, like St. Peter's, to attract the eye and fill it with wonder, yet I boldly say that there is no monument of man's labour and skill, pertaining either to ancient or modern Rome, for whatever purpose designed, which can rival the water-works of Lisbon ; I mean the stupendous aqueduct whose principal arches cross the valley to the north-east of Lisbon, and which discharges its little runnel of cool and delicious water into the rocky cistern within that beautiful edifice called the Mother of the Waters, from whence all Lisbon is supplied with the crystal lymph, though the source is seven leagues distant. Let travellers devote one entire morning to inspecting the Arcos and the Mai das agoas, after which they may repair to the English church and cemetery, Père-la-chaise in miniature, where, if they be of England, they may well be excused if they kiss the cold tomb, as I did, of the author of *Amelia*, the most singular genius which their island ever produced, whose works it has long been the fashion to abuse in public and to read in secret. In the same cemetery rest the mortal remains of Doddridge, another English author of a different stamp, but justly admired and esteemed. I had not intended, on disembarking, to remain long in Lisbon, nor indeed in Portugal ; my destination was Spain, whither I shortly proposed to direct my steps, it being the intention of the Bible Society to attempt to com-

mence operations in that country, the object of which should be the distribution of the word of God, for Spain had hitherto been a region barred against the admission of the Bible ; not so Portugal, where, since the revolution, the Bible had been permitted both to be introduced and circulated.

## TRAVELLING AT NIGHT

(*George Borrow*)

WE had now no choice but to resume our doleful way to Villafranca, which, we were told, was a short league distant, though it proved a league and a half. We found it no easy matter to quit the town, for we were bewildered amongst its labyrinths, and could not find the outlet. A lad about eighteen was, however, persuaded by the promise of a peseta, to guide us : whereupon he led us by many turnings to a bridge, which he told us to cross, and to follow the road, which was that of Villafranca ; he then, having received his fee, hastened from us.

We followed his directions, not, however, without a suspicion that he might be deceiving us. The night had settled darker down upon us, so that it was impossible to distinguish any object, however nigh. The lightning had become more faint and rare. We heard the rustling of trees, and occasionally the barking of dogs, which last sound, however, soon ceased, and we were in the midst of night and silence. My horse, either from weariness, or the badness of the road, frequently stumbled ; whereupon I dismounted, and leading him by the bridle, soon left Antonio far in the rear.

I had proceeded in this manner a considerable way, when a circumstance occurred of a character well suited to the time and place.

I was again amidst trees and bushes, when the horse stopping short, nearly pulled me back. I know not how it was, but fear suddenly came over me, which, though in darkness and in solitude, I had not felt before. I was about to urge the animal forward, when I heard a noise at my right hand, and listened attentively. It seemed to be that of a person or persons forcing their way through branches and brushwood. It soon ceased, and I heard feet on the road. It was the short staggering kind of tread of people carrying a very heavy substance, nearly too much for their strength, and I thought I heard the hurried breathing of men over-fatigued. There was a short pause, during which I conceived they were resting in the middle of the road ; then the stamping recommenced, until it reached the other side, when I again heard a similar rustling amidst branches ; it continued for some time and died gradually away.

I continued my road, musing on what had just occurred, and forming conjectures as to the cause. The lightning resumed its flashing, and I saw that I was approaching tall black mountains.

This nocturnal journey endured so long that I almost lost all hope of reaching the town, and had closed my eyes in a doze, though I still trudged on mechanically, leading the horse. Suddenly a voice at a slight distance before me roared out, '*Quien vive ?*' for I had at last found my way to Villafranca. It proceeded from the sentry in the suburb, one of those singular half soldiers, half guerillas, called Miguelets, who are in general employed by the Spanish government to clear the roads of robbers. I gave the usual answer, '*España*', and went up to the place where he stood. After a little conversation, I sat down on a stone,

awaiting the arrival of Antonio, who was long in making his appearance. On his arrival, I asked if any one had passed him on the road, but he replied that he had seen nothing. The night, or rather the morning, was still very dark, though a small corner of the moon was occasionally visible. On our inquiring the way to the gate, the Miguelet directed us down a street to the left, which we followed. The street was steep, we could see no gate, and our progress was soon stopped by houses and wall. We knocked at the gates of two or three of these houses (in the upper stories of which lights were burning), for the purpose of being set right, but we were either disregarded or not heard. A horrid squalling of cats, from the tops of the houses and dark corners, saluted our ears, and I thought of the night arrival of Don Quixote and his squire at Toboso, and their vain search amongst the deserted streets for the palace of Dulcinea. At length we saw light and heard voices in a cottage at the other side of a kind of ditch. Leading the horses over, we called at the door, which was opened by an aged man, who appeared by his dress to be a baker, as indeed he proved, which accounted for his being up at so late an hour. On begging him to show us the way into the town, he led us up a very narrow alley at the end of his cottage, saying that he would likewise conduct us to the posada.

The alley led directly to what appeared to be the market-place, at a corner house of which our guide stopped and knocked. After a long pause an upper window was opened, and a female voice demanded who we were. The old man replied, that two travellers had arrived who were in need of lodging. ‘I cannot be disturbed at this time of night,’ said the woman ; ‘they

will be wanting supper, and there is nothing in the house ; they must go elsewhere.' She was going to shut the window, but I cried that we wanted no supper, but merely resting place for ourselves and horses—that we had come that day from Astorga, and were dying with fatigue. 'Who is that speaking ?' cried the woman. 'Surely that is the voice of Gil, the German clockmaker from Pontevedra. Welcome, old companion ; you are come at the right time, for my own is out of order. I am sorry I have kept you waiting, but I will admit you in a moment.'

The window was slammed to, presently a light shone through the crevices of the door, a key turned in the lock, and we were admitted.

## FLOOD

(*John Galt*)

ABOUT daybreak it began to rain, and continued to pour with increasing violence all the morning ; no one thought of stirring abroad who could keep within shelter. My boys and I had for task only to keep the fire at the door of the shanty brisk and blazing, and to notice that the pools, which began to form around us, did not become too large ; for sometimes, besides the accumulation of the rain, little streams would suddenly break out, and rushing towards us, would have extinguished our fire, had we not been vigilant.

The site I had chosen for the shanty was near to a little brook, on the top of the main river's bank. In fine weather, no situation could be more beautiful ; the brook was clear as crystal, and fell in a small cascade into the river, which, broad and deep, ran beneath the bank with a swift but smooth current.

The forest up the river had not been explored above a mile or two : all beyond was the unknown wilderness. Some vague rumours of small lakes and beaver dams were circulated in the village, but no importance was attached to the information : save but for the occasional little torrents, with which the rain sometimes hastily threatened to extinguish our fires, we had no cause to dread inundation.

The rain still continued to fall incessantly : the pools it formed in the hollows of the ground began, towards

noon, to overflow their banks, and to become united. By and by something like a slight current was observed passing from one to another ; but thinking only of preserving our fire, we no farther noticed this, than by occasionally running out of the shanty into the shower, and scraping a channel to let the water run off into the brook or the river.

It was hoped that about noon the rain would slacken ; but in this we were disappointed. It continued to increase, and the ground began to be so flooded, while the brook swelled to a river, that we thought it might become necessary to shift our tent to a higher part of the bank. To do this, we were, however, reluctant, for it was impossible to encounter the deluge without being almost instantly soaked to the skin ; and we had put the shanty up with more care and pains than usual, intending it should serve us for a home until our house was comfortably finished.

About three o'clock the skies were dreadfully darkened and overcast. I had never seen such darkness while the sun was above the horizon, and still the rain continued to descend in cataracts, but at fits and intervals. No man, who had not seen the like, would credit the description.

Suddenly a sharp flash of lightning, followed by an instantaneous thunder-peal, lightened up all the forest ; and almost in the same moment the rain came lavishing along as if the windows of heaven were opened ; anon another flash, and a louder peal burst upon us, as if the whole forest was rending over and around us.

I drew my helpless and poor trembling little boys under the skirts of my great coat.

Then there was another frantic flash, and the roar of the thunder was augmented by the riven trees that

fell cloven on all sides in a whirlwind of splinters. But though the lightning was more terrible than scimitars, and the thunder roared as if the vaults of heaven were shaken to pieces and tumbling in, the irresistible rain was still more appalling than either. I have said it was as if the windows of heaven were opened. About sunset, the ground floods were as if the fountains of the great deep were breaking up.

I pressed my shivering children to my bosom, but I could not speak. At the common shanty, where there had been for some time an affectation of mirth and ribaldry, there was now silence ; at last, as if with one accord, all the inhabitants rushed from below their miserable shed, tore it into pieces, and ran with the fragments to a higher ground, crying wildly, ‘ The river is rising ! ’

I had seen it swelling for some time, but our shanty stood so far above the stream, that I had no fear it would reach us. Scarcely, however, had the axemen escaped from theirs, and planted themselves on the crown of a rising ground nearer to us, where they were hastily constructing another shed, when a tremendous crash and roar was heard at some distance in the woods, higher up the stream. It was so awful, I had almost said so omnipotent, in the sound, that I started on my feet, and shook my treasures from me. For a moment the Niagara of the river seemed almost to pause—it was but for a moment—for instantly after, the noise of the rending of mighty trees, the crashing and the tearing of the unrooted forest, rose around. The waters of the river, troubled and raging, came hurling with the wreck of the woods, sweeping with inconceivable fury everything that stood within its scope ;—a lake had burst its banks.

The sudden rise of the water soon, however, subsided ; I saw it ebbing fast, and comforted my terrified boys. The rain also began to abate. Instead of those dreadful sheets of waves which fell upon us, as if some vast ocean behind the forest was heaving over its spray, a thick continued small rain came on ; and about an hour after sunset, streaks and breaks in the clouds gave some token that the worst was over ;—it was not, however, so ; for about the same time a stream appeared in the hollow, between the rising ground to which the axemen had retired, and the little knoll on which our shanty stood ; at the same time the waters in the river began to swell again. There was on this occasion no abrupt and bursting noise ; but the night was fast closing upon us, and a hoarse muttering and angry sound of many waters grew louder and louder on all sides.

The darkness, and increasing rage of the river, which there was just twilight enough to show was rising above the brim of the bank, smote me with inexpressible terror. I snatched my children by the hand, and rushed forward to join the axemen, but the torrent between us rolled so violently, that to pass was impossible, and the waters still continued to rise.

I called aloud to the axemen for assistance ; and when they heard my desperate cries, they came out of the shed, some with burning brands, and others with their axes glittering in the flames ; but they could render no help : at last, one man, a fearless back-woodsman, happened to observe, by the firelight, a tree on the bank of the torrent, which it in some degree overhung, and he called for others to join him in making a bridge. In the course of a few minutes the tree was laid across the stream, and we scrambled over, just as the river extinguished our fire, and swept our shanty away.

## WELLINGTON'S GENERALSHIP

(*Sir William Napier*)

WELLINGTON's campaigns furnish lessons for generals of all nations, but they must always be especial models for British commanders in future continental wars ; because he modified and reconciled the great principles of art with the peculiar difficulties which attend generals controlled by politicians who prefer parliamentary intrigue to national interests. An English commander must not trust his fortune. He dare not risk much, however conscious he may be of personal resources, when one disaster will be his ruin at home ; his measures must be subordinate to this primary consideration. Wellington's caution, springing from that source, has led friends and foes alike into wrong conclusions as to his system of war ; the French call it want of enterprise, timidity ; the English have denominated it the Fabian system. These are mere phrases. His system was the same as that of all great generals. He held his army in hand, keeping it with unmitigated labour always in a fit state to march or to fight, and acted indifferently as occasion offered on the offensive or defensive, displaying in both a complete mastery of his art. Sometimes he was indebted to fortune, sometimes to his natural genius, always to his untiring industry, for he was emphatically a pains-taking man.

That he was less vast in his designs, less daring in

execution, neither so rapid nor so original a commander as Napoleon must be admitted ; and being later in the field of glory it is to be presumed he learned something of the art from that greatest of all masters. Yet something besides the difference of genius must be allowed for the difference of situation ; Napoleon was never, even in his first campaign of Italy, so harassed by the French as Wellington was by the English, Spanish, and Portuguese governments : their systems of war were, however, alike in principle, their operations being only modified by their different political positions. Great bodily exertion, unceasing watchfulness, exact combinations to protect their flanks and communications without scattering their forces ; these were common to both ; in defence firm, cool, enduring, in attack fierce and obstinate ; daring when daring was politic, yet always operating by the flanks in preference to the front ; in these things they were alike : in following up a victory the English general fell short of the French emperor. The battle of Wellington was the stroke to a battering-ram, down went the wall in ruins ; the battle of Napoleon was the swell and dash of a mighty wave before which the barrier yielded, and the roaring flood poured onwards covering all.

But there was nothing of timidity or natural want of enterprise to be observed in the English general's campaigns. Neither was he of the Fabian school. He recommended that commander's system to the Spaniards, he did not follow it himself ; his military policy more resembled that of Scipio Africanus. Fabius, dreading Hannibal's veterans, red with the blood of four consular armies, hovered on the mountains, refused battle, and to the unmatched skill and valour of the great Carthaginian opposed the almost inexhaustible

military resources of Rome. Wellington was never loath to fight when there was any equality of numbers ; he landed in Portugal with only nine thousand men, with intent to attack Junot who had twenty-four thousand ; at Roriça he was the assailant ; at Vimiera he was assailed, but he would have changed to the offensive during the battle if others had not interfered. At Oporto he was again the daring and successful assailant ; in the Talavera campaign he took the initiatory movements, although in the battle itself he sustained the shock. His campaign of 1810 in Portugal was entirely defensive, because the Portuguese army was young and untried ; but his pursuit of Massena in 1811 was entirely aggressive although cautiously so, as well knowing that in mountain warfare those who attack labour at a disadvantage. The operations of the following campaign, including the battles of Fuentes Onoro and Albuera, the first siege of Badajos, and the combat of Guinaldo, were of a mixed character ; so was the campaign of Salamanca ; but the campaign of Vittoria and that in the south of France were entirely and eminently offensive.

Slight therefore is the resemblance to the Fabian warfare. And for the Englishman's hardiness and enterprise, bear witness the passage of the Douro at Oporto, the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, the storming of Badajos, the surprise of the forts at Mirabete, the march to Vittoria, the passage of the Bidassoa, the victory of the Nivelle, the passage of the Adour below Bayonne, the fight of Orthes, the crowning battle of Toulouse !

To say that he committed faults is only to say that he made war ; to deny him the qualities of a great commander is to rail against the clear midday sun

for want of light. How few of his combinations failed ! How many battles he fought, victorious in all ! Iron hardihood of body, a quick and sure vision, a grasping mind, untiring power of thought, and the habit of laborious minute investigation and arrangement ; all these qualities he possessed, and with them that most rare faculty of coming to prompt and sure conclusions on sudden emergencies. This is the certain mark of a master-spirit in war ; without it a commander may be distinguished, he may be a great man, he cannot be a great captain : where troops nearly alike in arms and knowledge are opposed, the battle generally turns upon the decision of the moment.—*The Peninsular War.*

## SLOTHS

(*Charles Waterton*)

THE sloth, in its wild state, spends its whole life in trees, and never leaves them but through force, or by accident. An all-ruling Providence has ordered man to tread on the surface of the earth, the eagle to soar in the expanse of the skies, and the monkey and squirrel to inhabit the trees : still these may change their relative situations without feeling much inconvenience : but the sloth is doomed to spend his whole life in the trees ; and, what is more extraordinary, not *upon* the branches, like the squirrel and the monkey, but *under* them. He moves suspended from the branch, he rests suspended from it, and he sleeps suspended from it. To enable him to do this, he must have a very different formation from that of any other known quadruped.

Hence, his seemingly bungled conformation is at once accounted for ; and in lieu of the sloth leading a painful life, and entailing a melancholy and miserable existence on its progeny, it is but fair to surmise that it just enjoys life as much as any other animal, and that its extraordinary formation and singular habits are but further proofs to engage us to admire the wonderful works of Omnipotence.

It must be observed, that the sloth does not hang head-downwards like the vampire. When asleep, he supports himself from a branch parallel to the earth. He first seizes the branch with one arm, and then with

the other ; and after that, brings up both his legs, one by one, to the same branch ; so that all four are in a line : he seems perfectly at rest in this position. Now, had he a tail, he would be at a loss to know what to do with it in this position : were he to draw it up within his legs, it would interfere with them ; and were he to let it hang down, it would become the sport of the winds. Thus his deficiency of tail is a benefit to him ; it is merely an apology for a tail, scarcely exceeding an inch and a half in length.

I observed, when he was climbing, he never used his arms both together, but first one and then the other, and so on alternately. There is a singularity in his hair, different from that of all other animals, and, I believe, hitherto unnoticed by naturalists ; his hair is thick and coarse at the extremity, and gradually tapers to the root, where it becomes fine as a spider's web. His fur has so much the hue of the moss which grows on the branches of the trees, that it is very difficult to make him out when he is at rest.

The male of the three-toed sloth has a longitudinal bar of very fine black hair on his back, rather lower than the shoulder-blades ; on each side of this black bar there is a space of yellow hair, equally fine ; it has the appearance of being pressed into the body, and looks exactly as if it had been singed. If we examine the anatomy of his fore-legs, we shall immediately perceive by their firm and muscular texture, how very capable they are of supporting the pendent weight of his body, both in climbing and at rest ; and, instead of pronouncing them a bungled composition, as a celebrated naturalist has done, we shall consider them as remarkably well calculated to perform their extraordinary functions.

As the sloth is an inhabitant of forests within the tropics, where the trees touch each other in the greatest profusion, there seems to be no reason why he should confine himself to one tree alone for food, and entirely strip it of its leaves. During the many years I have ranged the forests, I have never seen a tree in such a state of nudity ; indeed, I would hazard a conjecture, that, by the time the animal had finished the last of the old leaves, there would be a new crop on the part of the tree he had stripped first, ready for him to begin again, so quick is the process of vegetation in these countries.

There is a saying amongst the Indians, that when the wind blows, the sloth begins to travel. In calm weather he remains tranquil, probably not liking to cling to the brittle extremity of the branches, lest they should break with him in passing from one tree to another ; but as soon as the wind rises, the branches of the neighbouring trees become interwoven, and then the sloth seizes hold of them, and pursues his journey in safety. There is seldom an entire day of calm in these forests. The trade-wind generally sets in about ten o'clock in the morning, and thus the sloth may set off after breakfast, and get a considerable way before dinner. He travels at a good round pace ; and were you to see him pass from tree to tree, as I have done, you would never think of calling him a sloth.

Thus, it would appear that the different histories we have of this quadruped are erroneous on two accounts : first, that the writers of them, deterred by difficulties and local annoyances, have not paid sufficient attention to him in his native haunts ; and secondly, they have described him in a situation in which he was never

intended by nature to cut a figure ; I mean on the ground. The sloth is as much at a loss to proceed on his journey upon a smooth and level floor, as a man would be who had to walk a mile in stilts upon a line of feather beds.

## THE PATHFINDER

(*James Fenimore Cooper*)

THE savages now ceased speaking, and the party that was concealed heard the slow and guarded movements of those who were on the bank, as they pushed the bushes aside in their wary progress. It was soon evident that the latter had passed the cover ; but the group in the water still remained, scanning the shore with eyes that glared through their war-paint, like coals of living fire. After a pause of two or three minutes, these three began also to descend the stream, though it was step by step, as men move who look for an object that has been lost. In this manner they passed the artificial screen, and Pathfinder opened his mouth, in that hearty but noiseless laugh, that nature and habit had contributed to render a peculiarity of the man. His triumph, however, was premature ; for the last of the retiring party, just at this moment casting a look behind him, suddenly stopped : and his fixed attitude and steady gaze at once betrayed the appalling fact that some neglected bush had awakened his suspicions.

It was, perhaps, fortunate for the concealed, that the warrior who manifested these fearful signs of distrust was young, and had still a reputation to acquire. He knew the importance of discretion and modesty in one of his years, and most of all did he dread the ridicule and contempt that would certainly follow a

false alarm. Without recalling any of his companions, therefore, he turned on his own footsteps ; and while the others continued to descend the river, he cautiously approached the bushes, on which his looks were still fastened, as by a charm. Some of the leaves which were exposed to the sun had drooped a little, and this slight departure from the usual natural laws had caught the quick eyes of the Indian ; for so practised and acute do the senses of the savage become, more especially when he is on the war-path, that trifles apparently of the most insignificant sort often prove to be clues to lead him to his object.

The trifling nature of the change which had aroused the suspicion of this youth, was an additional motive for not acquainting his companions with his discovery. Should he really detect anything, his glory would be the greater for being unshared ; and should he not, he might hope to escape that derision which the young Indian so much dreads. Then there were the dangers of an ambush and a surprise, to which every warrior of the woods is keenly alive, to render his approach slow and cautious. In consequence of the delay that proceeded from these combined causes, the two parties had descended some fifty or sixty yards before the young savage was again near enough to the bushes of the Pathfinder to touch them with his hand.

Notwithstanding their critical situation, the whole party behind the cover had their eyes fastened on the working countenance of the young Iroquois, who was agitated by conflicting feelings. First came the eager hope of obtaining success where some of the most experienced of his tribe had failed, and with it a degree of glory that had seldom fallen to the share of one of his years or a brave on his first war-path ; then fol-

lowed doubts, as the drooping leaves seemed to rise again, and to revive in the currents of air ; and distrust of hidden danger lent its exciting feeling to keep the eloquent features in play. So very slight, however, had been the alteration produced by the heat on bushes of which the stems were in the water, that when the Iroquois actually laid his hand on the leaves, he fancied that he had been deceived. As no man ever distrusts strongly without using all convenient means of satisfying his doubts, however, the young warrior cautiously pushed aside the branches, and advanced a step within the hiding-place, when the forms of the concealed party met his gaze, resembling so many breathless statues. The low exclamation, the slight start, and the glaring eye, were hardly seen and heard, before the arm of Chingachgook was raised, and the tomahawk of the Delaware descended on the shaven head of his foe. The Iroquois raised his hands frantically, bounded backward, and fell into the water, at a spot where the current swept the body away, the struggling limbs still tossing and writhing in the agony of death. The Delaware made a vigorous but unsuccessful attempt to seize an arm, with the hope of securing the scalp ; but the bloodstained waters whirled down the current, carrying with them their quivering burthen.—*The Pathfinder.*

## THE INFANCY OF SUPERSTITION AND IDOLATRY

*(Robert Eyres Landor)*

THERE may have been, at first, no rejection of the Divine supremacy when the worshipper in preference addressed his prayers to its instruments or its attributes. These became usurpers unambitiously and by degrees. The sovereign to whose majesty they had been subject was not excluded by them, but concealed. And thus, too, what we call nature, and the elements, of which all visible things consist, were impregnated by sympathy. When the brute universe had a spirit breathed into it from human passions, such as terror, hope, wonder, love, it quickened with that imaginary life which is now grown old, and more than half extinct. At present, spirit and matter disengage themselves from each other's embraces like alienated lovers, and grow hostile as well as cold.

To us it appears as if the ancients had been always such. Yet for their religion of two or three thousand years ago, we must look back, as they did, to ages and generations more ancient still. We have a clearer view of the mechanism, though from a greater distance. We know, better than they knew, how truth was reproduced, and by what means it was remodelled and reforged, till the image became effaced and the legend obliterated. Reversing the philosophy of later ages, these primitive idolaters strove to deduce Fable from

Truth, not Truth from Fable. Earth, Air, Fire, Water were the children of one god, whom they had almost forgotten, and the parents of many gods who might be still farther multiplied as they pleased. By their alliances and intermarriages the universe was peopled with dreams. Every unusual combination of them was a prodigy : the tree and the brook had its inhabitant ; if there were sufficient peculiarity in its shape, or magnitude, or position, even the rock had its historian.

Thus the hundred fountains of Osca were supplied by a little lake hidden in the mountains which rose behind. Its form was almost circular, its situation not quite inaccessible. Similar reservoirs, many higher and some larger, are common enough in countries of the same description. Whether created by fire, of which there is now no other trace, or by some casual perforation of the soil not yet hardened into stone, they are deeper than the plummet-line can fathom, and the quantity of water which they contain always remains the same. Impious would have been esteemed, in those days, any attempt to show that from the mountain solitudes above Osca, the barren ranges and inaccessible pinnacles mingling with the clouds behind, enough of water for three such cities must continually percolate, and that it might collect.

In stooping to pick up wisdom, we have dropped some graceful absurdities which pleased us better and which were not always without their use. We have exiled such delicate people as the Nymphs and Dryads from our companionship, to make room for many ugly realities. Superstition, while overshadowing this Oscan source of a hundred fountains from curiosity, protected it also from every other vulgar intrusion. It was said that the sun never shone upon its waters, and

that the winds never stirred them. That the cool element was so chaste as to endure contact with neither air nor fire. That till it had left its sanctuary, and descended for human use to the world below, it might be neither tasted nor touched. Nature had, indeed, secured it from the sun's rays by placing it northward of the mountains ; and against grosser profanation, by permitting no more paths to it than one. Never had human footstep approached through any other way ; and this way was closed from careless or irreligious intrusion by a sanctuary scarcely less sacred than itself.

A diminutive temple dedicated to Silence and Mystery (as Tradition declared, coeval with the ground on which it stood) crossed this path. Confronting one another, it had two gates, and over their threshold was that single path to the lake above. Two priests guarded the two gates. Every pious man in Osca believed that the lamp hanging between them had been suspended there without hands ; that it burned without oil ; and that never had it been lighted or extinguished. The temple was the World's Epitome : the gates were supposed to be typical of Life and Death, the priests of Silence and Mystery, and the lamp above of the Eternal Providence which watches our entrance, presence, and departure. There was no altar, no image, no offering, and the two priests never prayed. Seated midway between time past and time to come, many thousand years had they (and if not the same priests, their predecessors) continued to gaze steadfastly in each other's faces, while the one was silently mysterious and the other mysteriously silent. The occult signification of all this needs no interpreter so long as our faith remains more active than our curiosity.

## GREAT NAMES AND SUPPOSED BENEFACATORS

*(Robert Eyres Landor)*

THE reverence due to great names bewilders all common sense, or rather all sense of common justice, even in the wise. We are indignant that Milton should have received no better recompense from King Charles the Second, for his happy concurrence in taking away the head of King Charles the First, than permission to live unmolested and to die in peace.

Shakespeare was concerned only in killing Sir Thomas Lucy's deer, instead of his father. Sir Thomas could have known no more of Shakespeare than that he was a mischievous neighbour associated with disorderly companions. There is not one gentleman in Great Britain who would scruple to protect his bucks and does, or even his pheasants and partridges, with still greater severity. Our gaols are crowded with much more modest offenders. But because Shakespeare, several years afterwards, became greater than any other man in the same province, Sir Thomas Lucy has been pelted ever since with the sharp pebbles of the witty and the rotten eggs of the stupid. His fault was that he did not foresee, what Shakespeare himself, at the same time, could not have imagined.

Sir Francis Bacon's contempt for the studies of Cambridge is told us approvingly and exultingly ; his disapprobation of Aristotle's philosophy ; and with

some mitigation, of Aristotle himself. We shall search to no purpose in the intellectual history of mankind, for any other three names greater than these. Let us pronounce them with awe ! But at what age did Sir Francis Bacon declare his contempt for the studies of Cambridge, and his disapprobation of the Aristotelian philosophy ? He was either fifteen or in his fifteenth year !

All America, north and south, all Spain, Portugal, Italy, Holland and England, contend which shall honour most admiringly those two mighty adventurers, Christopher Columbus and Americus Vespucci ; for all six countries have had some share, either in the enterprises themselves, or in the profits arising from them. There is a scramble among us which shall pick out from our dictionaries the finest words, to write them in imperishable letters over their golden images. And who would refuse either a lofty niche or a glorious inscription ? Let our epigraphs declare the courage and constancy of these illustrious men, their wisdom, their piety, their forbearance, their endurance. Surely these be good gifts. But when we babble about them as the greatest benefactors of mankind, what is the truth ? At the lowest computation, from twelve to fifteen millions of innocent people were exterminated by themselves and their successors—people remarkable for honesty, docility, and true civilization, who nevertheless ignorantly supposed that they had the best right to their own country. Because they were perplexed by such an illustration of the Christian faith, their throats were cut, if they would not be converted, to punish disbelief, and, if they had been converted, to prevent apostacy. Groans issuing from beneath its surface have made their native land

tremble during these three hundred years : for as often as Death struck off his fetters from one slave, Avarice replaced them on another. It was in vain than such tyranny destroyed its own empire by creating a wilderness. Commerce introduced, for the blood which was spilled, the flesh which was stolen. Three hundred years have been spent in extracting gold and silver by all those crimes which God abhors, and in reducing their conquerors from the wealthiest and most powerful people in Europe to the poorest and most helpless.

His intentions having been beneficent, I impute no blame to Columbus : perhaps we should excuse the necessity by which every historian and biographer, in compliance with the public taste, has written so wickedly about him. If the discovery had not been made by Columbus, it would have been made, and probably with the same result. Yet he has founded the empire of cruelty over one-half of that great continent, of fraud and avarice over the other. He has given the opportunity to greater crimes, and to the infliction of more extensive misery, with fewer benefits, than had ever disgraced mankind before. Luckily for us Christians, neither the American red men nor the African black men have, as far as we are aware, any historians.

## TITUS FLAMINIUS

(*Robert Eyres Landor*)

LUGWARDINE : My knowledge of Flaminus is imperfect and indistinct. I remember little else correctly than that he was the conqueror of Philip.

ACILIUS : Rome would not have given him the consulship prematurely, and have entrusted the war against Macedonia to one scarcely thirty years old, because his temper was mild, his habits were noble, or his tastes refined, unless she had seen in him other and rarer qualities. For in this age of illustrious men, the people might have selected whom they pleased, and yet wisely. Rome had not to contend with some effeminate Asiatic, but with the phalanxes of Macedonia commanded by Philip. This was a struggle for the mastery between one nation which had conquered the world, and another which aspired to conquer it.

Happily for Flaminus, the war was protracted long enough to exhibit his highest qualifications as a statesman and a general, but no longer. After having proved his skill, his courage, his prudence, and his magnanimity, it ended in one great battle decisive of its object. There was comparatively little of that carnage which has made so many generals resemble wolves among sheep, or butchers within their shambles. Our high priest offered to the infernal deities no more than a single hecatomb, but its victims were all costly. The two most warlike nations of mankind fought in

a fair field, with numbers fairly proportioned, for its supremacy?

Rome was victorious ; Greece was freed from its subjection to Macedonia ; Philip, ceasing to contend, gave his son as a hostage. This was such glory as placed Flaminius on the left hand of his great contemporary, Scipio Africanus. . . . Yet far higher felicity was before him. Greece had been freed from Macedonia ; but in what sense, and to what extent ? Liberty, from which were derived her earliest honours, her happiness at all times, her moral and intellectual superiority, her name proudest among the nations of mankind,—in what sense, and to what extent, had it been restored ? This passion, the more intense because during so many ages, it had been confined to her bosom alone ; this motive to all her noblest virtues, all her loftiest enterprises, and many of her fiercest crimes ; with which she still panted like a Sybil stimulated and maddened by the divinity within, but sometimes relapsing heartless and hopeless too, like her,—should it again smoulder under another domination, merely changing Macedonian tyranny for Roman patronage ? Or would Rome content her ambition with such a superintendency as she exercised elsewhere, approving or disapproving, permitting or forbidding, remonstrating in little matters, but threatening if they became great ?

The Isthmian games are at hand, and then the conqueror will speak ! Such were the questions and expectations debated by multitudes, all converging to the same centre, from many nations once the most powerful and illustrious upon earth, small as they were. Would Flaminius place his garrisons in the cities of Corinth, Chalcis, and Demetrias, watching and over-

awing Greece, while he permitted her magistrates to resume their functions? Would he acquiesce in what the Roman senate, and what those ten commissioners from Rome, proposed? Or rather as the Ætolians maintained, would he not impose still heavier chains than those of Philip, more strong though better polished, releasing the feet but shackling the hands and neck?

The Isthmian games begin : all Greece is assembled ; the Roman proconsul presides. After the first acclamations of victory, that decree will be heard which has the same force as if uttered by destiny, and is waited for with the same awe. The highest hope at present is, not that Greece may become free, but less humiliated by her subjection. After the trumpet has ceased to sound, and while the herald walks forth, how terrible is the suspense ! He proclaims, in the name of Rome, that ‘*Titus Quinctius Flaminius, having conquered Philip and the Macedonians, restores liberty and their national laws to all the states and cities of Greece. Their taxes are remitted ; their garrisons are withdrawn ; they will choose their own magistrates ; they are the friends and allies of Rome.*’

LUGWARDINE : No other man can have attained to such happiness as this. Some of your historians have said that the assembled people did not, at first, either believe or understand what they heard, through the trepidation excited by their own eagerness,—that their hearts beat so audibly as to intercept the herald’s words,—that they demanded a repetition of the decree,—and that when he had confirmed it with a still louder voice, their acclamations killed or stunned the birds which were flying across the theatre above their heads ! This kind of glory is purchased without tears, by beneficence instead of blood ; and, remember that yet

greater lustre is shed upon it by Flaminius, because the concession was painfully extorted from Rome, and only after many passionate supplications as well as some vehement and dangerous remonstrances. Even to Scipio there was no single day like this ; nor would there have been to Hannibal if he had entered Rome.

## THE BLACK TENTS

(*Alexander William Kinglake*)

My steps were reluctantly turned towards the north. I had ridden some way, and still it seemed that all life was fenced and barred out from the desolate ground over which I was journeying. On the west there flowed the impassable Jordan ; on the east stood an endless range of barren mountains ; and on the south lay that desert sea that knew not the plashing of an oar ; greatly, therefore, was I surprised, when suddenly there broke upon my ear the long, ludicrous, persevering bray of a donkey. I was riding at this time some few hundred yards ahead of all my party, except the Nazarene (who, by a wise instinct, kept closer to me than to Dthemetri), and I instantly went forward in the direction of the sound, for I fancied that where there were donkeys, there too most surely would be men. The ground on all sides of me seemed thoroughly void and lifeless, but at last I got down into a hollow, and presently a sudden turn brought me within thirty yards of an Arab encampment. The low black tents which I had so long lusted to see were right before me, and they were all teeming with live Arabs—men, women, and children.

I wished to have let my people behind know where I was, but I recollect that they would be able to trace me by the prints of my horse's hoofs in the sand, and, having to do with Asiatics, I felt the danger of the slightest movement which might be looked upon

as a sign of irresolution. Therefore, without looking behind me—without looking to the right or to the left, I rode straight up towards the foremost tent. Before it was strewed a semicircular fence of dead boughs ; through this, and about opposite to the front of the tent, there was a narrow opening. As I advanced, some twenty or thirty of the most uncouth-looking fellows imaginable came forward to meet me. In their appearance they showed nothing of the Bedouin blood ; they were of many colours, from dingy brown to jet black, and some of these last had much of the negro look about them. They were tall, powerful fellows, but repulsively ugly. They wore nothing but the Arab shirts, confined at the waist by leather belts.

I advanced to the gap left in the fence, and at once alighted from my horse. The chief greeted me after his fashion by alternately touching first my hand and then his own forehead, as if he were conveying the virtue of the touch like a spark of electricity. Presently I found myself seated upon a sheepskin spread for me under the sacred shade of Arabian canvas. The tent was of a long, narrow, oblong form, and contained a quantity of men, women, and children, so closely huddled together, that there was scarcely one of them who was not in actual contact with his neighbour. The moment I had taken my seat, the chief repeated his salutations in the most enthusiastic manner, and then the people having gathered densely about me, got hold of my unresisting hand, and passed it round like a claret jug for the benefit of everybody. The women soon brought me a wooden bowl full of buttermilk, and welcome indeed came the gift to my hungry and thirsty soul.

After some time, my people, as I had expected,

came up ; and when poor Dthemetri saw me on my sheepskin, ‘ the life and soul ’ of this ragamuffin party, he was so astounded that he even failed to check his cry of horror ; he plainly thought that now, at last, the Lord had delivered me (interpreter and all) into the hands of the lowest Philistines.

Mysseri carried a tobacco-pouch slung at his belt, and as soon as its contents were known, the whole population of the tent began begging like spaniels for bits of the beloved weed. I concluded, from the abject manner of these people, that they could not possibly be thorough-bred Bedouins, and I saw, too, that they must be in the very last stage of misery, for poor indeed is the man in these climes who cannot command a pipeful of tobacco. I began to think that I had fallen amongst thorough savages, and it seemed likely enough that they would gain their very first knowledge of civilization by seizing and studying the contents of my dearest portmanteaus, but still my impression was that they would hardly venture upon such an attempt ; I observed, indeed, that they did not offer me the bread and salt (the pledges of peace amongst wandering tribes), but I fancied that they refrained from this act of hospitality, not in consequence of any hostile determination, but in order that the notion of robbing me might remain for the present an ‘ open question ’. I afterwards found that the poor fellows had no bread to offer. They were literally ‘ out at grass ’ ; it is true that they had a scanty supply of milk from goats, but they were living almost entirely upon certain grass stems which were just in season at that time of the year. These, if not highly nourishing, are pleasant enough to the taste, and their acid juices come gratefully to thirsty lips.—*Eothen*.

## THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY

(*Lord Macaulay*)

CLIVE was in a painfully anxious situation. He could place no confidence in the sincerity or in the courage of his confederate : and, whatever confidence he might place in his own military talents, and in the valour and discipline of his troops, it was no light thing to engage an army twenty times as numerous as his own. Before him lay a river over which it was easy to advance, but over which, if things went ill, not one of his little band would ever return. On this occasion, for the first and for the last time, his dauntless spirit, during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision. He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting ; and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards, he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that, if he had taken the advice of that council, the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of some trees, and passed near an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put everything to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river on the morrow.

The river was passed ; and, at the close of a toilsome day's march, the army, long after sunset, took up its

quarters in a grove of mango-trees near Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep ; he heard, through the whole night, the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the Nabob. It is not strange that even his stout heart should now and then have sunk, when he reflected against what odds, and for what a prize, he was in a few hours to contend.

Nor was the rest of Surajah Dowlah more peaceful. His mind, at once weak and stormy, was distracted by wild and horrible apprehensions. Appalled by the greatness and nearness of the crisis, distrusting his captains, dreading every one who approached him, dreading to be left alone, he sat gloomily in his tent, haunted, a Greek poet would have said, by the furies of those who had cursed him with their last breath in the Black Hole.

The day broke, the day which was to decide the fate of India. At sunrise the army of the Nabob, pouring through many openings from the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay. Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance of the largest size, each tugged by a long team of white oxen, and each pushed on from behind by an elephant. Some smaller guns, under the direction of a few French auxiliaries, were perhaps more formidable. The cavalry were fifteen thousand, drawn, not from the effeminate population of Bengal, but from the bolder race which inhabits the northern provinces ; and the practised eye of Clive could perceive that both the men and the horses were more powerful than those of the Carnatic. The force which he had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men.

But of these nearly a thousand were English ; and all were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline. Conspicuous in the ranks of the little army were the men of the Thirty-Ninth Regiment, which still bears on its colours, amidst many honourable additions won under Wellington in Spain and Gascony, the name of Plassey, and the proud motto, *Primus in Indis.*

The battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field-pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was readily received. He ordered his army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to reassemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable wagons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors. With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of near sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.—*Essay on Lord Clive.*

## THE SIEGE OF LONDONDERRY : COMMENCED

(*Lord Macaulay*)

JAMES had been assured, and had fully expected, that the city would yield as soon as it was known that he was before the walls. Finding himself mistaken, he broke loose from the control of Melfort, and determined to return instantly to Dublin. Rosen accompanied the King. The direction of the siege was intrusted to Maumont. Richard Hamilton was second, and Pusignan third, in command.

The operations now commenced in earnest. The besiegers began by battering the town. It was soon on fire in several places. Roofs and upper stories of houses fell in, and crushed the inmates. During a short time the garrison, many of whom had never before seen the effect of a cannonade, seemed to be discomposed by the crash of chimneys, and by the heaps of ruin mingled with disfigured corpses. But familiarity with danger and horror produced in a few hours the natural effect. The spirit of the people rose so high that their chiefs thought it safe to act on the offensive. On the twenty-first of April a sally was made under the command of Murray. The Irish stood their ground resolutely ; and a furious and bloody contest took place. Maumont, at the head of a body of cavalry, flew to the place where the fight was raging. He was struck in

the head by a musket ball, and fell a corpse. The besiegers lost several other officers, and about two hundred men, before the colonists could be driven in. Murray escaped with difficulty. His horse was killed under him ; and he was beset by enemies : but he was able to defend himself till some of his friends made a rush from the gate to his rescue, with old Walker at their head.

In consequence of the death of Maumont, Richard Hamilton was once more commander of the Irish army. His exploits in that post did not raise his reputation. He was a fine gentleman and a brave soldier ; but he had no pretensions to the character of a great general, and had never, in his life, seen a siege. Pusignan had more science and energy. But Pusignan survived Maumont little more than a fortnight. At four in the morning of the sixth of May the garrison made another sally, took several flags, and killed many of the besiegers. Pusignan, fighting gallantly, was shot through the body. The wound was one which a skilful surgeon might have cured : but there was no such surgeon in the Irish camp ; and the communication with Dublin was slow and irregular. The poor Frenchman died, complaining bitterly of the barbarous ignorance and negligence which had shortened his days. A medical man, who had been sent down express from the capital, arrived after the funeral. James, in consequence, as it should seem, of this disaster, established a daily post between Dublin Castle and Hamilton's headquarters. Even by this conveyance letters did not travel very expeditiously : for the couriers went on foot ; and, from fear probably of the Enniskilleners, took a circuitous route from military post to military post.

May passed away : June arrived ; and still Londonderry held out. There had been many sallies and skirmishes with various success : but, on the whole, the advantage had been with the garrison. Several officers of note had been carried prisoners into the city ; and two French banners, torn after hard fighting from the besiegers, had been hung as trophies in the chancel of the Cathedral. It seemed that the siege must be turned into a blockade. But before the hope of reducing the town by main force was relinquished, it was determined to make a great effort. The point selected for assault was an outwork called Windmill Hill, which was not far from the southern gate. Religious stimulants were employed to animate the courage of the forlorn hope. Many volunteers bound themselves by oath to make their way into the works or to perish in the attempt. Captain Butler, son of the Lord Mountgarret, undertook to lead the sworn men to the attack. On the walls the colonists were drawn up in three ranks. The office of those who were behind was to load the muskets of those who were in front. The Irish came on boldly and with a fearful uproar, but after long and hard fighting were driven back. The women of Londonderry were seen amidst the thickest fire serving out water and ammunition to their husbands and brothers. In one place, where the wall was only seven feet high, Butler and some of his sworn men succeeded in reaching the top ; but they were all killed or made prisoners. At length, after four hundred of the Irish had fallen, their chiefs ordered a retreat to be sounded.

Nothing was left but to try the effect of hunger. It was known that the stock of food in the city was but slender. Indeed it was thought strange that the

supplies should have held out so long. Every precaution was now taken against the introduction of provisions. All the avenues leading to the city by land were closely guarded. On the south were encamped, along the left bank of the Foyle, the horsemen who had followed Lord Galmoy from the valley of the Barrow. Their chief was of all the Irish captains the most dreaded and the most abhorred by the Protestants. For he had disciplined his men with rare skill and care ; and many frightful stories were told of his barbarity and perfidy. Long lines of tents, occupied by the infantry of Butler and O'Neil, of Lord Slane and Lord Gormanstown, by Nugent's Westmeath men, by Eustace's Kildare men, and by Cavanagh's Kerry men, extended northward till they again approached the water side. The river was fringed with forts and batteries which no vessel could pass without great peril. After some time it was determined to make the security still more complete by throwing a barricade across the stream, about a mile and a half below the city. Several boats full of stones were sunk. A row of stakes was driven into the bottom of the river. Large pieces of fir wood, strongly bound together, formed a boom which was more than a quarter of a mile in length, and which was firmly fastened to both shores by cables a foot thick. A huge stone, to which the cable on the left bank was attached, was removed many years later, for the purpose of being polished and shaped into a column. But the intention was abandoned, and the rugged mass still lies, not many yards from its original site, amidst the shades which surround a pleasant country house named Boom Hall. Hard by is the well from which the besiegers drank. A little farther off is the burial ground where they laid their slain, and

where even in our own time the spade of the gardener has struck upon many skulls and thigh-bones at a short distance beneath the turf and flowers.—*History of England.*

## THE SIEGE OF LONDONDERRY : RAISED

*(Lord Macaulay)*

JUST at this time Kirke received a dispatch from England, which contained positive orders that Londonderry should be relieved. He accordingly determined to make an attempt which, as far as appears, he might have made, with at least an equally fair prospect of success, six weeks earlier.

Among the merchant ships which had come to Lough Foyle under his convoy was one called the Mountjoy. The master, Micaiah Browning, a native of Londonderry, had brought from England a large cargo of provisions. He had, it is said, repeatedly remonstrated against the inaction of the armament. He now eagerly volunteered to take the first risk of succouring his fellow citizens ; and his offer was accepted. Andrew Douglas, master of the Phoenix, who had on board a great quantity of meal from Scotland, was willing to share the danger and the honour. The two merchantmen were to be escorted by the Dartmouth, a frigate of thirty-six guns, commanded by Captain John Leake, afterwards an admiral of great fame.

It was the twenty-eighth of July. The sun had just set : the evening sermon in the cathedral was over ; and the heartbroken congregation had separated, when the sentinels on the tower saw the sails of three vessels coming up the Foyle. Soon there was a stir in the Irish camp. The besiegers were on the alert for miles

along both shores. The ships were in extreme peril : for the river was low ; and the only navigable channel ran very near to the left bank, where the headquarters of the enemy had been fixed, and where the batteries were most numerous. Leake performed his duty with a skill and spirit worthy of his noble profession, exposed his frigate to cover the merchantmen, and used his guns with great effect. At length the little squadron came to the place of peril. Then the Mountjoy took the lead, and went right at the boom. The huge barricade cracked and gave way : but the shock was such that the Mountjoy rebounded, and stuck in the mud. A yell of triumph rose from the banks : the Irish rushed to their boats, and were preparing to board ; but the Dartmouth poured on them a well-directed broadside, which threw them into disorder. Just then the Phoenix dashed at the breach which the Mountjoy had made, and was in a moment within the fence. Meantime the tide was rising fast. The Mountjoy began to move, and soon passed safe through the broken stakes and floating spars. But her brave master was no more. A shot from one of the batteries had struck him ; and he died by the most enviable of all deaths, in sight of the city which was his birth-place, which was his home, and which had just been saved by his courage and self-devotion from the most frightful form of destruction. The night had closed in before the conflict at the boom began ; but the flash of the guns was seen and the noise heard, by the lean and ghastly multitude which covered the walls of the city. When the Mountjoy grounded, and when the shout of triumph rose from the Irish on both sides of the river, the hearts of the besieged died within them. One who endured the unutterable anguish of that

moment has told us that they looked fearfully livid in each other's eyes. Even after the barricade had been passed, there was a terrible half hour of suspense. It was ten o'clock before the ships arrived at the quay. The whole population was there to welcome them. A screen made of casks filled with earth was hastily thrown up to protect the landing place from the batteries on the other side of the river ; and then the work of unloading began. First were rolled on shore barrels containing six thousand bushels of meal. Then came great cheeses, casks of beef, fitches of bacon, kegs of butter, sacks of pease and biscuit, ankers of brandy. Not many hours before, half a pound of tallow and three quarters of a pound of salted hide had been weighed out with niggardly care to every fighting man. The ration which each now received was three pounds of flour, two pounds of beef, and a pint of pease. It is easy to imagine with what tears grace was said over the suppers of that evening. There was little sleep on either side of the wall. The bonfires shone bright along the whole circuit of the ramparts. The Irish guns continued to roar all night ; and all night the bells of the rescued city made answer to the Irish guns with a peal of joyous defiance. Through the three following days the batteries of the enemy continued to play. But, on the third night, flames were seen arising from the camp ; and when the first of August dawned, a line of smoking ruins marked the site lately occupied by the huts of the besiegers ; and the citizens saw far off the long column of pikes and standards retreating up the left bank of the Foyle towards Strabane.

So ended this great siege, the most memorable in the annals of the British Isles. It had lasted a hundred and five days. The garrison had been reduced from

about seven thousand effective men to about three thousand. The loss of the besiegers cannot be precisely ascertained. Walker estimated it at eight thousand men. It is certain from the dispatches of Avaux that the regiments which returned from the blockade had been so much thinned that many of them were not more than two hundred strong. Of thirty-six French gunners who had superintended the cannonading, thirty-one had been killed or disabled. The means both of attack and of defence had undoubtedly been such as would have moved the great warriors of the Continent to laughter ; and this is the very circumstance which gives so peculiar an interest to the history of the contest. It was a contest, not between engineers, but between nations ; and the victory remained with the nation which, though inferior in number, was superior in civilization, in capacity for self-government, and in stubbornness of resolution.—*History of England.*

## GIFTS

(*Ralph Waldo Emerson*)

IT is said that the world is in a state of bankruptcy, that the world owes the world more than the world can pay, and ought to go into chancery, and be sold. I do not think this general insolvency, which involves in some sort all the population, to be the reason of the difficulty experienced at Christmas and New Year, and other times, in bestowing gifts ; since it is always so pleasant to be generous, though very vexatious to pay debts. But the impediment lies in the choosing. If, at any time, it comes into my head that a present is due from me to somebody, I am puzzled what to give, until the opportunity is gone. Flowers and fruits are always fit presents ; flowers, because they are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty outvalues all the utilities of the world. These gay natures contrast with the somewhat stern countenance of ordinary nature : they are like music heard out of a workhouse. Nature does not cocker us : we are children, not pets : she is not fond : everything is dealt to us without fear or favour, after severe universal laws. Yet these delicate flowers look like the frolic and interference of love and beauty. Men use to tell us that we love flattery, even though we are not deceived by it, because it shows that we are of importance enough to be courted. Something like that pleasure the flowers give us : what am I to whom these sweet hints are addressed ? Fruits are accept-

able gifts because they are the flower of commodities, and admit of fantastic values being attached to them. If a man should send to me to come a hundred miles to visit him, and should set before me a basket of fine summer fruit, I should think there was some proportion between the labour and the reward.

For common gifts, necessity makes pertinences and beauty every day, and one is glad when an imperative leaves him no option, since if the man at the door have no shoes, you have not to consider whether you could procure him a paint-box. And as it is always pleasing to see a man eat bread, or drink water, in the house or out of doors, so it is always a great satisfaction to supply these first wants. Necessity does everything well. In our condition of universal dependence, it seems heroic to let the petitioner be the judge of his necessity, and to give all that is asked, though at great inconvenience. If it be a fantastic desire, it is better to leave to others the office of punishing him. I can think of many parts I should prefer playing to that of the Furies. Next to things of necessity, the rule for a gift which one of my friends prescribed is, that we might convey to some person that which properly belonged to his character, and was easily associated with him in thought. But our tokens of compliment and love are for the most part barbarous. Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself. Thou must bleed for me. Therefore the poet brings his poem ; the shepherd, his lamb ; the farmer, corn ; the miner, a gem ; the sailor, coral and shells ; the painter, his picture ; the girl, a hand-kerchief of her own sewing. This is right and pleasing, for it restores society in so far to the primary basis,

when a man's biography is conveyed in his gift, and every man's wealth is an index of his merit. But it is a cold, lifeless business when you go to the shops to buy me something, which does not represent your life and talent, but a goldsmith's. This is fit for kings, and rich men who represent kings, and a false state of property, to make presents of gold and silver stuffs, as a kind of symbolical sin-offering, or payment of black mail.

The law of benefits is a difficult channel, which requires careful sailing, or rude boats. It is not the office of a man to receive gifts. How dare you give them? We wish to be self-sustained. We do not quite forgive a giver. The hand that feeds us is in some danger of being bitten. We can receive anything from love, for that is a way of receiving it from ourselves; but not from any one who assumes to bestow. We sometimes hate the meat which we eat, because there seems something of degrading dependence in living by it.

Brother, if Jove to thee a present make,  
Be sure that from his hands thou nothing take.

We ask the whole. Nothing less will content us. We arraign society if it do not give us—besides earth, and fire, and water,—opportunity, love, reverence, and objects of veneration.

He is a good man who can receive a gift well. We are either glad or sorry at a gift, and both emotions are unbecoming. Some violence, I think, is done, some degradation borne, when I rejoice or grieve at a gift. I am sorry when my independence is invaded, or when a gift comes from such as do not know my

spirit, and so the act is not supported ; and if the gift pleases me overmuch, then I should be ashamed that the donor should read my heart, and see that I love his commodity, and not him.

## MARCUS AURELIUS

(*Matthew Arnold*)

THE record of the outward life of this admirable man has in it little of striking incident. He was born at Rome on the 26th of April, in the year 121 of the Christian era. He was nephew and son-in-law to his predecessor on the throne, Antoninus Pius. When Antoninus died, he was forty years old, but from the time of his earliest manhood he had assisted in administering public affairs. Then, after his uncle's death in 161, for nineteen years he reigned as emperor. The barbarians were pressing on the Roman frontier, and a great part of Marcus Aurelius's nineteen years of reign was passed in campaigning. His absences from Rome were numerous and long : we hear of him in Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Greece ; but, above all, in the countries on the Danube, where the war with the barbarians was going on,—in Austria, Moravia, Hungary. In these countries much of his *Journal* seems to have been written ; parts of it are dated from them ; and there, a few weeks before his fifty-ninth birthday, he fell sick and died.<sup>1</sup> The record of him on which his fame chiefly rests is the record of his inward life,—his *Journal*, or *Commentaries*, or *Meditations*, or *Thoughts*, for by all these names has the work been called. Perhaps the most interesting

<sup>1</sup> He died on the 17th of March, A.D. 180.

of the records of his outward life is that which the first book of this work supplies, where he gives an account of his education, recites the names of those to whom he is indebted for it, and enumerates his obligations to each of them. It is a refreshing and consoling picture, a priceless treasure for those, who, sick of the ' wild and dreamlike trade of blood and guile ', which seems to be nearly the whole of what history has to offer to our view, seek eagerly for that substratum of right thinking and well-doing which in all ages must surely have somewhere existed, for without it the continued life of humanity would have been impossible. ' From my mother I learnt piety and beneficence, and abstinence not only from evil deeds but even from evil thoughts ; and further, simplicity in my way of living, far removed from the habits of the rich.' Let us remember that, the next time we are reading the sixth satire of Juvenal. ' From my tutor I learnt ' (hear it, ye tutors of princes !) ' endurance of labour, and to want little, and to work with my own hands, and not to meddle with other people's affairs, and not to be ready to listen to slander.' The vices and foibles of the Greek sophist or rhetorician—the *Graeculus esuriens*—are in everybody's mind ; but he who reads Marcus Aurelius's account of his Greek teachers and masters, will understand how it is that, in spite of the vices and foibles of individual *Graeculi*, the education of the human race owes to Greece a debt which can never be overrated. The vague and colourless praise of history leaves on the mind hardly any impression of Antoninus Pius : it is only from the private memoranda of his nephew that we learn what a disciplined, hard-working, gentle, wise, virtuous man he was ; a man who, perhaps, interests mankind less than his immortal nephew

only because he has left in writing no record of his inner life,—*caret quia vate sacro*.

Of the outward life and circumstances of Marcus Aurelius, beyond these notices which he has himself supplied, there are few of much interest and importance. There is the fine anecdote of his speech when he heard of the assassination of the revolted Avidius Cassius, against whom he was marching ; *he was sorry*, he said, *to be deprived of the pleasure of pardoning him*. And there are one or two more anecdotes of him which show the same spirit. But the great record of the outward life of a man who has left such a record of his lofty inward aspirations as that which Marcus Aurelius has left, is the clear consenting voice of all his contemporaries,—high and low, friend and enemy, pagan and Christian,—in praise of his sincerity, justice, and goodness. The world's charity does not err on the side of excess, and here was a man occupying the most conspicuous station in the world, and professing the highest possible standard of conduct ;—yet the world was obliged to declare that he walked worthily of his profession. Long after his death, his bust was to be seen in the houses of private men through the wide Roman empire : it may be the vulgar part of human nature which busies itself with the semblance and doings of living sovereigns, it is its nobler part which busies itself with those of the dead ; these busts of Marcus Aurelius, in the homes of Gaul, Britain, and Italy, bore witness, not to the inmates' frivolous curiosity about princes and palaces, but to their reverential memory of the passage of a great man upon the earth. . . .

Yet, when one passes from his outward to his inward life, when one turns over the pages of his *Meditations*,

—entries jotted down from day to day, amid the business of the city or the fatigues of the camp, for his own guidance and support, meant for no eye but his own, without the slightest attempt at style, with no care, even for correct writing, not to be surpassed for naturalness and sincerity,—all disposition to carp and cavil dies away, and one is overpowered by the charm of a character of such purity, delicacy, and virtue. He fails neither in small things nor in great ; he keeps watch over himself both that the great springs of action may be right in him, and that the minute details of action may be right also.—*Essays in Criticism.*





